A practical guide to overcoming love affection

by Diane de l'Ariège

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Preface

This guide is dedicated to those who, from rational reasoning, judge their current experience of being in love as unhealthy, unwanted, or dangerous to themselves, regardless of whether it is reciprocal or unrequited; or whose desire to end it stems from self-interest. It offers practical means to destroy all feelings towards another person, free both from stigma and from questioning one's motives.

The methods in the guide can be executed even without support net or under persistent social adversity. However, the present work does not deal with the subject of rivalry over the same person with someone else. This guide is about self-determination and self-control, it is not concerned with manipulation of other people. Rather, it addresses “how to own yourself and be owned by no one else”, and so continues beyond the subject of love into existential philosophy, the phenomenon of ambivalence and discourse on morality.

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Introduction. The non-idealization principle

Firm resolve to free oneself from love is best achieved by affirming hard stance against idealization of all love per se. It should be seen, indeed, that **no kind of love possesses any inherent virtue**.[1] A “selfless” or “caring” act can overstep the agency and boundaries of the other person, and thus cannot be judged by intent to do good alone. And while this moral stance – to reject positing any kind of love as a justifiable end in itself – follows from respect for autonomy of another person and thus would need to be upheld even it was to one's inconvenience, it shall be seen as enabling better judgment for whether to remain in love or to act out of love.

I am borrowing “limerence” term from the book by Dorothy Tennov called “Love and Limerence”, in order to disambiguate the different meanings associated with the word “love”. Limerence specifically refers to the kind of love that can be said to possess an individual. It is not how one acts, it is what is going on with them, and can't simply be willed away should experience turn into an unhappy or detrimental one. Unlike infatuation, limerence[2] tends to endure rather than be immediately dissolved when facing an interpersonal adversity with the person it makes one preoccupied with. Also, it endures still upon learning their traits and actions that are at odds with previous conception of them, unless this truth challenges specifically core conceptions that were relevant to choosing them out of other people in the first place.

Methods offered here are not limited to dealing with limerence. Some (particularly the second and the third) can successfully deal with “chemistry” experienced towards clingy people, or those who see flirting as a game to “win”. In these latter cases, “chemistry” endures only because of constant reinforcement, whereas

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[1] The virtue of love is to be regarded as conditional. It definitely is not virtuous if the other person is against such act or against the person doing anything, for any reason.

[2] If clarification of term “limerence” is sought for any reason, it is the original Dorothy Tennov's “Love and Limerence” work that needs to be consulted – as per scholarly practice of studying primary sources. However, that work does not offer practical means to get over it, and is not required to peruse this guide this otherwise. It is rather that other interpretations of “limerence” (by other researchers) are distorted and have to be avoided. Those interpretations also attach a certain stigma to the experience and the person experiencing it, which is counterproductive to resolving it. The proper use of judgment is to direct it against having relationship with the other person because of valid personally meaningful reason(s), which bypasses both blame and self-deprecation traps. Positing a singular such reason results in a *more* stable ground (for going through the disengagement) than positing plural reasons.

limerence is capable of self-sustaining, so different cases are best suited by different methods. A later chapter, “How to choose a method”, provides suggestions for typically encountered scenarios based on methods' strengths and weaknesses.

I method – Deconstruction / Disillusionment

This approach is about obtaining clarity under strain – when you experience difficulty to sort through your priorities. It involves assumption that limerence is predicated on **illusion of uniqueness** of the other person. The uniqueness is about them filling unique role in one's life, and is never about sex or sensual experience.

This uniqueness can be about one's fulfilment – say, an aspiring athlete might fall in love with a trainer who is world-class one, and remain in it so long as they continue to believe no one else can carry them to greatness. It may be founded upon envy. It may be, on occasion, the pursuit of mutual exposure of most valuable interests, coupled with the belief that only this person could understand us or only they would value the process of such understanding. Such a belief may occur to the person who has gone through much pain in their life. Yet life has seen to it that actual things two people may have in common will be very narrow and/or shared with a lot of other people. The (re)discovery of this truth then may come as a relief, and can occur naturally, but there is a benefit to bringing about this change consciously – to avoid covert grief experience.

Therefore, we take the concept “this person is unique to me”, and demolish it. Additional steps are taken to ensure self-control – persistence and determination in overcoming the affection – for the entire time it takes until it is resolved. Then a faith in one's general ability is reaffirmed, self-image, which may be heavily damaged, is repaired. Since limerence affects both behavior and perception, all the below steps are to be considered necessary, none of them being optional, although they can, should need arise, be executed out of order or repeated/revisited.

1. **Removing obstacles to better judgment.**

   Eliminate attributions of positive experience to person or love itself. Recall the events that happened at or before the probable onset of affection, and your own attitude towards the person also before that point. Focus – put the spotlight – on every evidence for those happy feelings originating not in the interest in the person itself, but elsewhere, due to other circumstances, and recall every suspicion, every sense of danger you ever experienced towards the person.

Circumstances belonging to this category are (non-exhaustive list): repeated praise of that person by other people, weather that evokes feeling similar to love or some mystery (this type sometimes occurs when there is no person one can attribute this feeling to and still feels the same), excitement over something you accomplished, pleasant experiences that co-occurred with you meeting/seeing that person who was then stranger, or those that were lived through both by you and them; or their past lack of concern and time for you – but ignore those times they showed concern, for they may have been doing it all only when it was to their benefit.

The idea of this step is to identify external factors that confound judgment (that is, which bias you towards positive impression), so they can be counteracted or refuted. Thus factors that can potentially introduce bias, should be presumed to be in effect, and addressed in a "better safe than sorry" manner.

2. **Remembering reason for leaving.**

   Ask yourself, why you need to stay apart from that person and cease to have feelings towards them, and why no secondary benefits, no inspiration that may come from emotions you feel at times (from, say, fantasy or interaction with that person) can be allowed to overturn this reason.

   Answer this the best you can. If possible, answer it in such a way that even if person would pursue you and make their best effort to make you return to them (even if it is at present an unrequited love), you will remain adamant in having no relationship with them whatsoever. This is the preferable resolution for this question, because it leaves no room for doubt – but if this is hard to achieve yet, focus on the undesirable consequences that will follow if: 1) you continue to pursue a relationship with that person 2) or otherwise act upon those hard-to-conceal feelings. Remember, that steps can be revisited, answers can be improved upon, you first address your present situation, then brace yourself for the future.

   Whereas previous point concerned repairing our perception, and thus making proper judgment possible, this one was concerned with strengthening our judgment and resolve to follow the correct course of action.

3. **Challenging the allegation of uniqueness.**

   Determine what need of yours that person was perceived as unique provider for, then disprove the statement they would be unique provider. Two primary ways of doing that: by finding other people who can provide the need, or,

through inner debate, establish falsity of uniqueness beyond reasonable doubt. You can also raise yourself to self-sufficiency with regard to that need, which is the third (but most difficult and rather slow) way.

This is, in fact, *existential*[3] love we are talking about – the need is not for sex nor sensual experience. If the need cannot be identified, the illusion was probably adopted to protect one's ego, such is the case of envy, which is always irrational. This is still a need in other sense: you compare yourself unfavorably to them only, hoping you could win against them only, and not have to win against the rest of the "high-achieving" world. In this case, inner debate and, if possible, striving for personal achievement is the way this step is executed, while the next step will take care of self-doubt.

A note regarding "finding other people" – even in cases when this is just one person (one is sufficient, but finding many is just as effective), this still leads to cessation of limerence and not to its transference. This is consistent with my assertion "uniqueness = limerence", as having found another person within original constraints, you have at least two and therefore neither of them can be unique.

As for comparative difficulty of the offered paths: the inner debate will really test your capacity to self-reflection and you may have to confront doubt several times, but is least dependent on external circumstances being favorable. The kind of striving for self-sufficiency that achieves the same here usually involves a big amount of time and effort and therefore needs to be backed by faith in success until the project is completed.

4. **Reasserting faith in one's own ability.**

   Recall any achievements you are proud of, everything great that you have, in the past (no matter recent one or distant), proven to be capable of – even if it is no longer true of present. Recognize also that breaking love spell won't happen overnight, and brace yourself for that fact: the persistence of limerence for some time hereafter shall not make you negatively reflect on yourself – the only thing that matters is your conviction, realization of necessity to liberate yourself from limerence despite any possible setbacks that may occur. Temporary setbacks (committing certain actions because of limerence or still

[3] The thesis about existential nature of limerence will be covered in a later chapter. Summarized in one sentence, limerence arises from the person having made a particular conviction: "I need to be with that one person to realize my destiny. If I miss them, I won't find another way".

experiencing limerence) should be regarded as that – temporary, not allowing them to affect self-image or faith in one's own ability.

In most general sense, this shall be your motto: “I'm capable of solving any problem if I undertake relevant training and attend to it consciously”. What I described above is merely a method to recognizing that – if you need a different approach, use one that works for you.

The fourth step is usually visited in one's mind last – after the relevant choice in pt.3 has been made, even if not necessary executed – as it's best to end on a positive note regarding self, especially if dealing with limerence founded on envy. However, if the case of limerence is hard and requires iterative improvements, such constraints are to be ignored, and any point can be visited and revisited as necessary and in whatever order.

The puzzle – answering all questions in relation to specific situation – may take variable time to complete. This really depends on difficulty of the case and your past experiences using this method: usually hours or days, but on rare occurrence life stacks misfortune against you, months. Complex cases might need out-of-order execution of steps, and reiterating them to improve. A strong version of pt.2 (**“even if person would pursue you**... **you will remain adamant in having no relationship with them whatsoever”**) doesn't have to be the first approximation, but once reached, can hold a lot on its own until pt.3 can be satisfied.

Below are some examples – in the form of fictional stories – that show how this is done in practice. I purposefully “neglected” the sensual aspect, and instead emphasised the problem-solving one, because I intend these to be read by people facing adversity which may go beyond the limerence or relationship. These stories therefore shall not be judged from literary perspective – they are purely instructional.

Example 1

Daniel is 21 years old and he plans to run his first marathon. He is training both alone and with a public group which he attends for free. This public group has two coaches: one is a renowned world-class marathoner and her lessons are primary suited for long-distance running (including, among other things, interval training sessions), which he attends. The other, is a man who holds current state's record for half a mile sprint and he trains strength and technique, but Daniel doesn't consider this part of training relevant to his goals (perhaps he is wrong) and so doesn't attend this man's classes.

On occasion, Daniel learns that marathoner also has private trainees – although they seem to be mostly rich guys – so when he encounters her in the park during him running solo, he asks about that but she replies that those are expensive, and that she doesn't have any spare time to book anyway. Daniel is somewhat distraught by that, worse yet by realization that he might have accidentally developed an attachment to this woman, which resulted from her having an unique position in his life. Still, he doesn't want to quit those public sessions, instead, he starts to attend strength and technique classes too, and discovers that male coach puts a lot of more passion in his work and is more skilled as a coach. For skill at some sport doesn't necessarily correlate with ability to teach it to others, and this means Daniel is not missing anything not being able to attend private classes with that woman – indeed she herself told him as such.

With position of that woman no longer unique, an unintended affection dissolves, while long-distance and tempo runs Daniel does on his own are already insurance enough that he will finish a marathon. Besides, finishing something through primary your own effort and in defiance of those who turn you down may harden one's character, as Daniel is about to find out.

Example 2

Tessa is a refugee, and is looking for connections in the country she moved into. She stumbles by a book written by a native citizen of that country, and feels she can relate to its characters, and develops feelings for its author as well. She is able to meet an author in person, they date each other a little, and she gives him her phone number.

All seems well – until it's not. A few days after they last met, Tessa returns home – by train, since she lives in a different city – and finds out she was ghosted: the writer has banned her from his blog, and is not answering to or even reading her private messages, although for whatever reason, he didn't block her ability to send messages. Once Tessa recovers from shock, she realizes she better keep her mind away from that person, and that she has to take care of herself, as she is the only one who will.

First, she recalls that she chanced upon the book because it was promoted on online group for expats which she was a member of, so her impressions of the author were not her own but fueled by other people's constant hype of that person, just as parallels between her life and that of characters

were far-fetched, only seized upon and magnified because of Tessa's present circumstances: that of loneliness and being around people of different culture, an alien. Now that in the circumstances that made her vulnerable – and of which the object of her limerence was aware – she was treated this way, she has reasons to just not want to do anything with that person anymore, and not to accept an apology, not that any seems to be coming.

So she has to lift her spirits in some way: in her case, this will come through personal achievement. Making new friends will take time, and she doesn't have work permit yet, so she starts working on her painting skills even as it leaves little money to spend on food. Painting was her hobby and she indeed dreamed of becoming an artist, but she had previously put that aside for the sake of moving to another country; now it is key to her success in her own eyes.

On the connections side, she joins an ecoactivist group, appearing to be benign to outside observer. In reality, however, she has subversive intent: a long-term plan for infiltration of and sabotage in activist communities, which she is going to execute slowly. Her mind thus preoccupied with a goal she keeps in secret, she is not looking back to that unfortunate love experience she had.

This method is effective in overcoming indecision in regards to whether or not end limerence deliberately, because it provides lucidity and the potential to break out of limerence when one's will is completely overpowered by it and does not see a purpose in resisting it. This potential is realized if the resolution in pt.3 is to act: to achieve the same thing through another person or by oneself, this achievement being conceived of when one is willing to fight the limerence, and is later realized, ending it regardless of whether one is still willing to fight at the time. It is also effective in addressing a case when limerence developed out of envy, which is explored in detail in the “Appendix B: Resolving limerence founded on envy” (story was moved to appendix because it was long).

The downside of this method is that it can be relatively difficult to pull off if another person actively pursues relationship with you, as you will be then distracted by experience that seems positive – enticed by false promises hard to resist.

II method – Estrangement / Betrayal

This method is founded on premise that our actions can effect a change within our minds (principally and perhaps controversially, “the subject is also an object to his own act”). External act – perceivable by other people – and not thought, is at the core of this method. But thought is not completely absent and it's contribution to success is not insignificant either – just de-emphasized, the action taking the spotlight.

One needs to conceive of such action that would contradict the particular context of relationship. Specifically, it has to be recognized – at least, by both parties to relationship – as making it inappropriate for this relationship to persist, or permanently dispossess the actor (you) of the right to claim this relationship has ever began, or that feelings of love ever existed. Depending on one's morality, this may fall either within the line of estrangement – increasing distance with the person to the one which could still be appropriate for some other relationship, but not a close one – or it could appear as an extreme form, betrayal. Regardless, for the method to be successful, these are the necessary constraints: the goal of this action must not be harming the person or otherwise effecting change in their mind, but nullifying that person's significance to you, and, if possible, for the action itself to provide valid reasons (from the perspective of other people) as to why you necessary disengage from all interactions with this person from now on. It may cause the other person lose interest in you as a side-effect – if they conclude you are not worthy of them as the result of your action – this is, however, not guaranteed.

Betrayal itself needs not be extreme – an appropriate example would be disclosure of what was established a (not too valuable) secret between two people or of a fragment of private conversation, which disclosure to other people doesn't actually endanger or embarrass the other person, but the fact of such disclosure violates the original context of privacy, which fact then justifies the end of intimate relationship (as that person can no longer trust you to maintain privacy of your conversations). Since definition of “intimate relationship” encompasses not just love, but also friendship, the use of this method retains plausible deniability

where relationship needs to be broken without raising concerns that it was necessary love or close to begin with. This deniability works both for other people, and, conveniently, for you, if for some reason the affection runs contrary to established self-image or some part of it, like apparent contradiction between your self-identified sexual orientation and the particular case.

Example 1

Emilia is a middle-aged woman running the analytics department of a software development company. She is married, but frequently flirts with her coworkers to relieve herself from stress. Yet when a new team is assembled to work on some new bleeding-age product, she seems to develop mutual chemistry with a male teammate, and maintaining the boundaries of a work relationship becomes problematic (perhaps for both sides). In a private conversation with him, Emilia learns that man has second thoughts about his occupation (he explains that it became difficult for him to achieve anything out of realms of computers, and blames his specialization in programming and "productivity" culture for this), which she brings to attention of the managers. No changes are made to the team after the events, but naturally these two begin to keep apart from each other.

Example 2

A professional footballer Ariane is admitted to the hospital following a permanent injury to her leg. She is in a lot of despair because of realization that her career must be over. Staff members are, however, fond of her due to her popularity and achievements, and try to reassure her that she might find success in other areas of life. Most of such words she finds insulting, but she developed a fondness for one of the nurses with a name Calista, who she sees as genuinely compassionate. Yet Ariane considers herself a person of ambition and has no intention of returning to this place in her mind even, once this hospital life is over, and she sees this attachment as potential obstacle to that. Then, at night she also sees a vivid dream of having sex with this nurse, which upon waking up, terrifies her, both because of ambition and because she thinks of herself as heterosexual. Thus she is seeking a definite end to this entanglement, and an opportunity presents itself. Calista accidentally misses the vein when taking blood samples from Ariane, to which Calista comments that Ariane should have no trouble experiencing this, as she enjoys pain – which from previous conversations

was established as true. Ariane shares this remark with some other nurse, claiming it offended her, even though in reality, it didn't: for Ariane indeed has masochistic tendencies and she had confided with Calista about that – but Ariane wants an excuse to not take fondly on Calista ever again. She does so and the feelings – never admitted to being more than friendship – go away. Neither talk to each other afterwards.

A downside to this method is that it is only valid against existing relationships with people you presently remain in contact with, and that it does not guide towards introspection of why action is required. It expects an already made conviction against maintaining that relationship, which means love is already part-done before one sets to end it, with strictly one obstacle remaining at that time: lack of distance.

III method – Eclipsement / Transference

This is also a method that – like the previous one – is simple, and is the last one I have to offer. The idea is that you deny the other party all attention by "draining" it towards someone else who overshadows them. By doing this, you avoid the trap of ambivalence (of swinging between love and hatred) towards the original person, instead becoming practically indifferent towards them, which is valuable if you have to remain in contact otherwise (at workplace, for example). It is also mandatory that the person to which limerence is transferred is superior to – eclipses – the original, leaving no room for regrets, for contemplation of ever going back. This strict requirement may, in practice, mean that it is impossible to secure relationship with the new person, but that they remain a temporary inspiration. In turn, possible self-esteem issues arising from the latter situation may be prevented by being physically very active and otherwise setting and accomplishing, in the present, demanding goals for oneself. Finally, when one secured distance from the original person and is sure of never going back, the new situation itself can be resolved per the first method, the Disillusionment, or it may resolve itself in time (the latter is not recommended).

Example 1

Selanna is a woman in her twenties who is pursuing the arduous path of self-discovery known as The Sevenfold Way. She's recently completed a marathon as part of striving for the physical standards set for Initiate stage

of the sinister tradition, and is continuing her training to reach the other two physical goals. She still has to have some income to sustain her pursuits, however, and so works full-time at some inconsequential company. There she is pursued by a certain coworker named Adele, who is an open bisexual woman, a physically attractive but rather promiscuous one who doesn't keep relationships for long, yet won't leave pursuit of someone who resists her charm. Although indeed inclined towards women, Selanna nonetheless is averse to close relationships with coworkers in principle, and considers her coworkers merely circumstantial people who are only in her life so long as she works at this inconsequential company, nor does Selanna want to be added to the list of someone's achievements. She needs to be sure she will never yield to this woman's pursuits, no matter what. Selanna recently parted with her girlfriend who “wanted no more part in a dangerous cult” – so she needs to cover that emptiness quickly, yet not with an inferior person. On the other side, she is unlikely to find a new companion in her Sevenfold Way pursuits this soon – such involvement, at present times, being risky to disclose to strangers.

Selanna manages to find a workaround. She conjures in her mind a recollection of distant (resident of far away country) professional female athlete, an ultramarathoner, who has already been Selanna's inspiration in the past when Selanna just began training for a marathon, and fantasizes about being with her while doing endurance-based physical activities. Very soon, limerence and not mere infatuation sets in, which doesn't bother her, for this only motivates her to train more vigorously. Adele still can't come to terms with Selanna appearing to have fallen in love and possibly having relationship with someone else already, but her coworkers are of different opinion and agree that Selanna really is not, in slightest, interested in Adele, which eventually leads to Adele's complete breakdown and that, in turn, almost gets her fired. Adele is then transferred to another unit within the company, losing sight of Selanna. Her objective secured, Selanna now could proceed to consciously end her limerence for the celebrity figure via Disillusionment method, although for some time she continues to think of flying to another country and meeting her favorite celebrity in person. However, since Selanna per her training possesses sufficient self-knowledge to infer what is possible for one to do and what is not: when before Selanna let herself loose in her dreams, she did that (because) fully knowing that her flying to another country will not happen before she will be over that woman. And this indeed turns out to be true, as besides passion for running

they have nothing else in common, as can be ascertained from published interviews of that celebrity.

Eclipsement is not about transference of love to an arbitrary person or engaging in promiscuous activity following a break-up. While there exists a different kind of people, for whom one-night stands will be just as good a person as they usually end up having a long relationship with, I do not count them among the target audience of the present work. For the target audience – concerned as they should be with self-determination – the person used as a replacement in context of Eclipsement shall always meet or surpass the standards that were projected onto the one they intend to render to the abyss of indifference. Living an active life – like Selanna does in the above example – is also important, for Eclipsement usually results in developing actual limerence for the new person, whereas the former experience is not necessary it.

Self-discipline is implied here – if choosing a person you can't communicate with, you are supposed not to communicate with any AI emulations of them as well.

On motivation and indecision

Getting rid of strong affection or malfunctioning relationship is tricky even having methods. One must will to do so. If going through really hard times, limerence may appear to be soothing, a poison that is also a painkiller, something that, although harmful, is yet at the same time beneficial.

The list below is thus a reminder of drawbacks that are more significant than any placebo patch that limerence can provide. The intent is to reinforce resolve to fight what is detrimental to one. Suggestions as to the way forward are also provided, when applicable.

1. **Erosion of self-esteem.**

   Whether you are open about having feelings, or harbor them secretly, many thoughts may occur in you that themselves can cause damage. Examples: doubts as to whether you are worthy of relationship with this person, or doubts as to whether you are worthy of an equal relationship, contemplation to concede to unequal one over having none.

   If you are being guilt-tripped in relationship, get the hell out – it's a red flag. Such relationship does even more harm than unrequited love case.

2. **Much is wasted on ruminating thoughts instead of achievement.**

   The nature of limerence is another person as a very important goal, so your mind sustains focus on it. Only way out is strike out the belief they are important (unique). Otherwise you lose few hours a day, or, in rare circumstances, all waking time.[4]

3. **You are better off without limerence or someone who mistreats you.**

   Never escape reality in limerence or relationships. Dealing with life hardships requires resources, these waste them. If there is too much on your plate, you might be picking priorities. The intrusive nature of limerence means it can't be de-prioritized. Making distinction between severe and mild trauma does not do anything good here. Consider getting rid of limerence – or decreasing its strength at least – as a way to reach your other relevant goals unobstructed or enhance performance at those relevant goals.

4. **Your moral values, goals in life, the way you approach communications are incompatible with those of that person.**

   That's reason enough to quit pursuing them. It is the answer for “Remembering reason for leaving”, the hard version: you don't want them in your life even if they chased you instead of the other way around.

[4] In my experience such extreme preoccupation lasts at most a few days, so the solution is to wait it out, then immediately use methods to break out of love for good once having an opportunity.

5. **Acting in restrained manner may have become difficult in the state of limerence.**

   If constant effort is needed to control one's own behavior, this means a lot of effort is wasted on things not relevant to achievement. This should be justification enough to rid of limerence. So forget those notions of “true love”, of “needing to get mature to understand love”, etc. that you might hear from useless people. You are dealing with the present and the solution needs to be in the present, since you are not getting assistance with the problem, then solve it however you must, and take rightful credit for it. Besides, in context of unrequited love, the virtue is to respect autonomy of the other person, not in love itself.

6. **Limerence not resolved consciously does not pass without a mark.**

   Time merely takes away hope. So one ceases to pursue, but is not really relieved, and depression may result.

   One might hesitate to abandon their pursuit, on the presumption that if they exhaust their attempts to secure a mutual and stable relationship and don't succeed, then this condition will be resolved without effort. Their reasoning is faulty, however: when hope is lost, the need – now presumed unsatisfiable – does not, from that alone, disappear, which brings depression. Then to that depression is added a realization that their effort could have been better spent: in obtaining other things. Other damage (self-esteem erosion, etc.) could have also been accumulated, which is not just a matter of how one chooses to perceive the situation, but something that has occurred for real and will require conscious effort to reverse.

7. **Grief after limerence may persist for long but be difficult to notice.**

   One form this may take is longing to return, or to go to for the first time, some place which once was related to the person or the relationship or was present (or even invented) in daydreams about them. It is not experienced as a longing for a person, but more like an emptiness that needs to be experienced at a particular place and no other. This state is just as damaging as that of limerence, for it may also detract from other pursuits, especially if acted upon, as well as sustaining depressed mood. It also tends to last much longer than relationship or limerence: if the former lasted months, this may last years.

There is similarity between death of a relative or loved one and break-up for some individuals. The fading out of unrequited limerence, if it was not consciously attended to, also results in the same thing. My view is therefore "grief is limerence sans hope", and the way to avoid getting afflicted with grief is to resolve the preceding state consciously, rather than to put trust in the passage of time.

8. **Other person distancing from you has not ended your limerence.**

   It doesn't work that way.[5] Although refraining from contact is often a moral thing to do, no matter who is initiating it, it doesn't solve the problem by itself most cases, but rather prevents escalation of social consequences. Limerence is caused by assertion that this person possesses something of unique value, that can only be obtained from them, and is a process by which mind pursues that very important goal. When other person denies you that opportunity, the need does not disappear, hence the state does not resolve. I have been once completely out-of-contact with some person (who was physically gone from my life, nor was it possible to find her online at all) for a year without stopping to think of her for one day – limerence really does not need contact to be self-sustainable. A need and believed-to-be unique potential provider of it is sufficient to sustain it.

   But the worst thing is that, once contact is lost, fantasies may become even wilder, and you may start to think of doing something really reckless. This is why it is necessary, if such situation is occurred that the person blocked you or otherwise indicated they don't want to be contacted, that you immediately start consciously working to end your affection.

9. **You've experienced something similar to Stockholm syndrome.**

   Sufficient conditions for this are: being stuck with person + some reasons to commiserate with them. A fear for life is not required – being held hostage by a terrorist is not necessary. Might result in intense limerence followed by period of withdrawal, during which action can be initiated to break out of it. Seek connections that render the person non-unique, schedule some meetings that may happen later, when you might be in limerence again.

[5] If you were the one initiating the move to keep apart, it could work to some degree – but only if and because you implicitly answered the question as to why you need to stay away from that person, and willfully exercised that resolution, not because of lack of communication itself. Otherwise keeping apart is wise no matter who decides on that first, but won't end your feelings by itself.

When those attending pre-arranged meetings happen, they will break the illusion of uniqueness and therefore the state of limerence even if you are not willing to do so anymore.

10. **You want the other person to spare you some compassion because you are going through difficult times.**

    This is an extremely dangerous disposition that is behind many cases of madness and suicide. In times of pandemics and wars, and given the dominance of Christianity-derived culture, these likely multiply. For sure if one holds another person in great esteem, she projects virtue onto them, and virtue as defined by Christian morality includes being merciful to others.

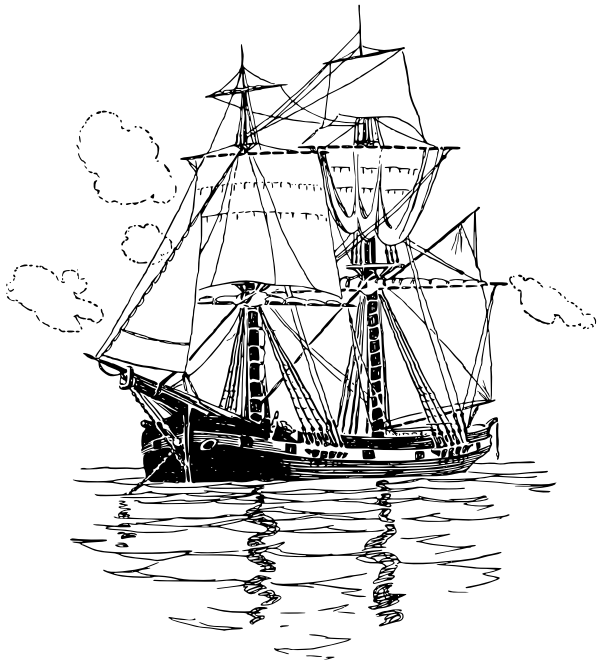
    In the context of unrequited love, this vain hope invariably leads one to abandon making their own effort in attempts to overcome adversity in their life, and besides this resignation, leaves one vulnerable to be harmed by the other person, whether the harm comes from their malicious intent or without it. The wise conduct is therefore to accept that help is not coming from anyone at all (or will be only of limited use) and use whatever resources are actually available to yourself to make as much improvements on your general situation as possible.

If you struggle to do something (like Deconstruction method) at once, do a partial solution and gradually improve on it. Ordered instructions can be turned into unordered ones: when I have a numbered list for something, but struggle, I turn it into a bullet list, beelining for stuff that can be done out-of-order and not perfectly. Procrastination habits that interfere can be defeated by making them inconvenient, by interrupting them as soon as you remember the imperative to stop procrastinating, and by replacement with more consciously exercised ones, for example: do a network search on topic of interest instead of browsing social networks, avoid suggestions but stick to the topic you decided to research. You may use Tor Browser to avoid fingerprinting and targeted ads (advice actual as of 2024, unless your country bans or blocks Tor). Reading a paperbook might be a good option, but only if you can actually do it – go for those conscious alternatives that you can engage at the time, don't shame yourself for not being able to switch to better ones yet.

Finally, even if the list above didn't convince you to get rid of limerence yet, but you know already what is that you are pursuing to obtain from another person, try to obtain it in some other way (without that person). For since you need it, your mind will appreciate, not block, alternative ways to pursue it. If this requires

making new connections, then do so; if motivation comes and goes, do it when it is present. Once you succeed, the love spell will be broken, even if right before success it was overwhelming you, and once broken, to appreciate freedom from it is inevitable. In other words: **create opportunity** you can later seize upon.

Managing limerence until its resolution



Since, in practice, even the most effective approach to the situation does not bring immediate freedom from love affection, or it may take some time to conceive of, and succeed in, practical implementation of the chosen approach, it is necessary to also carefully manage the situation until then.

1. **Refrain, as much as possible, from talking to or about the person.**

   In many contexts, it is not actually possible to entirely avoid communication with the person altogether, and panicking if communication has occurred is not helpful anyway. But this is still preferable: do not initiate conversations with or about the person, avoid reacting to what that person says or does, decline (politely) if asked to give an opinion on that person's opinion, etc. Keep in mind that trying to speak as if impartial won't work, and that you can't count on that challenging situations won't appear – you have to fix this on your own side, without relying on promises from other people (such

promises as that they won't bring about the subject that annoys you, for example, or for the other person not to initiate contact either).

2. **Avoid self-blame and stay by your own side**

   Self-blame has no positive uses. Engage in damage control instead. Don't internalize whatever negative opinions you heard from other people, in relation to your experience. Recognize that, it is you and not any other that is solving this problem, and that you alone shall take credit for it. You must respect yourself unconditionally, conscious of the fact only one person can truly be always by your side and that is you. If other people speak negatively of you, it serves as yet another proof of that.

   For example, you talked about them in public. You were afraid that if you don't, you can't later claim you were ever in love with that person. Now you regret the consequences of exposure, and this regret sticks around and is eating away at you. Formulate a plan as to how you will respond to a hypothetical inquiry as to why you said those things. This preparedness is important regardless of whether you will actually have to explain it: taking care of relevant concerns is a direct counter to being stuck.

3. **Filter out irrelevant cues**

   Intimacy (of minds) is meant to be a two-way street. In a hot-and-cold case, only cold is real, at all times. The individual only uses hot when they need a favor from you, or because you make their work hours less dull. They want you as a resource, they aren't giving anything back and do not see you as the person to be intimate with in psychological sense. If you are after intimacy, you must recognize their fruit is rotten. To this end, it is justifiable to filter all incoming signals: the cold signalize definite lack of intimacy, the hot do not signal intimacy either. Accordingly, those who try to tell you rejecting them is immoral are not to be trusted. If you were raised to place the need of others above your own, you need to break that programming. However, non-conformist individuals are not necessary immune to it either – I learned filtering on my own because I had to.

4. **Don't attack, seek vengeance against or plan malice towards the person**

   These are not moral considerations, but practical ones. A swing of attitude is not uncommon, when it changes yet again, you might feel regret towards your past actions, worse yet, a corrosive guilt and a desire to reverse what you have done. Hatred and even acting upon it doesn't end affection and can

instead be a form of its sustenance (the Estrangement method is carefully constructed to target not the other person, but to take away the possibility of relationship on the premise it is already not treasured much). Once affection is over, it may become apparent that pursuing vengeance was a waste of resources, for you were just as obsessed with vengeance as you were with the person themselves, which prevented you from pursuing greater goals.

If you need it, you can direct malice elsewhere – not at a person. Engaging in certain long-term projects that are driven by some subversive motive, such as creativity, activism, infiltration may actually be important in preserving integrity of the self, as well as provide opportunity for personally meaningful achievement. Tessa's story wouldn't work without subversion.

5. **Limerence is primary of cognitive origin and is not about conflict with the other person**

   The source of limerence is that erroneous conclusion: “there is only one person who can provide me with that essential need”. Search for negative traits in the other person doesn't work except when can be used to support an argument, as to why this person really cannot provide that essential need, or why relationship with them must be avoided at all cost – even if agreed to or insisted by that other person – because of the damage that will happen. Outside of this constraint, it is irrelevant. Tolerating these negative traits would otherwise be perceived as necessary to get what can't be yet obtained another way, so popular beliefs as to how deal with unhappy love should be ignored. Uniqueness, not idealization, is at core of limerence.

   Relationship with a person can be damaging, draining or dangerous to you even if they are not themselves bad and do not have malicious intent. If your life goals are different and incompatible, that's reason enough to part ways. You need a strong moral stance against specifically *having a relationship* with them, as judging the person might not work under ambivalence.

6. **Do not romanticize your experience**

   Avoid reflecting on what being inside this experience means, focus on getting over it. Avoid romantic or appreciative portrayals of *any* kind of love for the duration of your experience. Stay away from those who talk about supposed virtue of any kind of love like if those people were plague. You want this to be over, you accept none of its benefits, real or imaginary, you accept there is no virtue in remaining in it or acting out of it.

7. **Don't belittle the problem as insignificant and don't describe it as fitting to immaturity**

   As in well-known warning about underestimating your enemy. If this is unrequited love, it is unrequited love, and not infatuation or a crush. Those would fall apart at first sign of adversity or contradiction to established ideal, suffering is intolerable and incompatible to them. Likewise, it is unwise to think that somebody else has greater problems or that your problem is not serious – even if it were true, it would be completely irrelevant, because you will be the one facing the consequences of your situation, this is what matters, and the significance of these consequences.

8. **If that other person ignores you or they had initiative in ending this relationship without explaining their reason, don't bother guessing what that reason could have been.**

   First and foremost, answering this question would be next to useless in ending limerence. All questions that are useful and therefore worth of answering are listed in “Disillusionment” method.

   You might be inquiring for motives of the other person because you think of those motives as potentially relevant in changing yourself and becoming the better version of you, but you don't have, can't have accurate knowledge in this situation, so to waste time on this is counterproductive. You also no longer have any obligation towards them. By choosing this way to end relationship, the other person forfeited any right to claim that you can't change or demand such change, for they didn't give you an opportunity. You also shall not assume that you are at fault and not them, especially if person cowardly removes themselves from relationship by not giving any notice of the fact they indeed abandoned it – which is known as “ghosting”.

9. **If facing complex case of limerence, stay calm and self-reliant**

   Sometimes, primary limerence can become entangled with a secondary one based on irrational envy, or some other challenging setup may appear. Those secondary ones may need to also be attended, as if they were standalone. You might be able to grasp only part of the situation at the time, and so present a partial solution at first. Arriving at the final solution will then happen iteratively. Otherwise, fundamental principles are the same.

   In the complex case it is especially risky to confide with any people about what you're going through – social adversity encountered under such rough and

durable conditions can have severe impact. So this fight is best taken alone. Note that partying with friends is fine, it's trying to find support for limerence experience that is dangerous, for you're more vulnerable in this situation than usual and for longer than usual. People who genuinely want to help can still worsen your condition instead of making it less painful – something that can be learned through experience, but better not in this particular scenario. Commiseration especially can devalue our effort in dealing with what is substantial adversity to us, it is rather admiration or vindication that we seek in its place, so if your friends can't give you those, don't get them involved.

10. **Write a letter to yourself (if you want) rather than to another person**

    There are cases when you feel like writing a letter to another person, either because you really want that, or because you heard of advice “write but not send” elsewhere and you want to try it out. In these cases, I suggest to write a letter to yourself instead, expressing unconditional support for your own self and that you are willing to protect them (the other, traumatized version of you) from that person. In some cases, you can have so much negative attitude towards being stuck in love with the person that you develop two personalities, where one wants to work on important project and the other is helplessly stuck in love and the former despises the latter, while the latter resents the former. Writing a letter to yourself, or learning to support yourself unconditionally, will help stitch them together. Or the completion of project will end the split, while those measures will stop self-sabotage, bringing closer that completion.

    Changing your attitude to yourself may be easier than you think, for example, you may have ideation of “unconditional love” towards another person that rejects you, it will be soon become apparent that to maintain it is not practical: you want to do something useful for that person but you can't + you can't realistically be the person who always gives to someone else but never takes from others + the mind can't physically sustain this state for long and will inevitably break out of it. At last you will realize that you could direct all that energy to yourself instead, just so it won't be wasted away.

How to choose a method

To evaluate which approach is best fit to the specific case, it may be useful to consider the properties of those methods: their resilience to case's circumstances and which skills they demand.

Deconstruction is a lucid method (which can help resolve internal ambivalence) but has least resilience against the person using it being pursued or otherwise contacted by the other person before one completes its puzzle in entirety. Eclipsement provides strongest resilience against pursuers from the get go, but the newly picked interest may turn into a new problem later. Estrangement is moderately resilient against pursuers (primary because it can cause the other person to lose interest too) and is down to executing a single action, but the conviction against continuing relationship must be already made, stable and strong. Skill-wise, Deconstruction corresponds to self-reflection, Estrangement – to conviction and practical action, Eclipsement – to imagination. This correspondence means which skill is most demanded for which method and which skill in turn is trained by it, for this goes both ways: if you want to get better at some skill, you are to exercise it.

From those observations, these guidelines can be derived:

- Feelings of love persist despite no present interaction with the person, their current attitude is either unknown or they've already rejected us ⇒ Deconstruction
- The person to get away from is clingy (flirtatious) or can (or even has tendency to) initiate interaction with us on their own, and is unavoidable in our daily life, and fails to pick up signals that we don't want them in our life, want them to stop flirting with us or are ambivalent towards them ⇒ Eclipsement
- Sporadic interaction, both parties can and maybe want to withdraw but feelings get in the way ⇒ Estrangement
- Interaction is possible, but only under our own initiative, feelings are not reciprocal or you've encountered this person only online ⇒ Deconstruction
- The person disappeared from our life and is not contactable ⇒ Deconstruction
- You already have strong conviction to end this relationship, do not need further reflection, contact is all that stands in the way and will not be renewed by the other party if terminated ⇒ Estrangement

These are propositions not absolutes – it's down to your personal experience which works better when, and to figure out solutions for other scenarios. To deal with clingy person when you are already in relationship with someone else – and thus cannot, or rather should not, use Eclipsement – is covered in the next chapter.

Other interpersonal situations

Although the original methods were derived from specific situations – those situations when to act upon love is undesirable or impossible and one is not already in a relationship – I've then discovered that some techniques can be extended to other interpersonal situations, or provide insight pieces that can apply to those situations.

1. **Breaking up or divorcing someone because of your initiative**

   For some people, being the one who leaves another person may be more difficult than someone else leaving them. Such people claim to periodically experience regret if they had the initiative in breaking-up, even if they recover much quicker from being left by the other person. Such people tend to leave relationship based on feelings (or lack thereof), rather than reaching judgment through faculty of reason.

   I leave relationships when I know a pretty good reason why I must leave, even if my feelings are in conflict with this reasoning. Doing, in effect, “Remembering reason for leaving” from Deconstruction method, I obtain certitude in doing the right thing and having done the right thing. Pain after rejecting someone may last only for a few days, through which I strengthen myself by remembering why it is necessary for me to do this, as well as through upholding “no pain, no gain” motto, and then those days pass and it just doesn't bother me anymore.

   Other points from “Deconstruction” method may be used as needed, since after all love was once there and may have not completely faded away, and being single/divorced/whatever may carry a certain stigma in society, which stigma then can be also countered by “Reasserting faith in one's own ability” step. That step also removes the need for external validation, which is valuable, especially when initiating divorce, for rarely one finds support from relatives.

Having friends in common may also make the process of break-up or divorce more painful, thus self-confidence is paramount to success.

2. **Ghosting**

   First thing to do if someone ghosts you is to break empathic connection. Don't try to understand them, explain their actions, or commiserate with them in any capacity. Do not retaliate against them, either. Consider them gone for good, and execute the first two points of Deconstruction method just as a safety measure, even if limerence is not suspected at the time. Generally, this behavior is a pattern for a person, so winning them back or accepting them back shall not ever be considered as an option. Gone is gone – good riddance.

   Contemplation to hurt them back should be dismissed. If you're in the same community and can observe each other from distance, you might feel inclined to mirror lack of insight into other's feelings by maintaining vigilant watch over yours, yet don't do this for this reason. Honoring the advice “refrain as much as possible from talking to or about the person” is sufficient and will come at a lesser cost to yourself. That is, don't keep a mental model of their mind – they are, after all, irrelevant.

   The other side: you have the moral right to leave without explaining why, but I consider the practice of ghosting (trying to obscure the fact that you left) to be a coward's way in most circumstances. I instead explicitly declare that I leave, that I don't want to be contacted and don't have to explain why. Only if they broke contact first I consider it acceptable (and indeed then preferable) to not make a statement about leaving.

3. **Communicating with people who lack sense of duty**

   Some people neither disappear nor are really available, nor have the honor to adhere to earlier agreements. When someone is telling you they have a busy schedule, this is indicative of a person you should not attach anything important to. Whatever promise they give you they are likely to break it. If you accidentally became attached to such person, break down that attachment (again Deconstruction is aptest) and disengage from further communication, and here I would not even bother with a notice.

4. **Getting rid of coworkers that stalk you when you're already in relationship**

   This is similar in a way with Estrangement method, and even to some degree to Eclipsement method (with a real person rather than a phantom), and is best explained through example.

Example 1

Rudy is a business counselor in a relationship with a professional artist Amelie, for almost a year already. At work, he is stalked by a slightly younger coworker, who had been flirting with him before when he was single, and while it used to trigger some spark in him back then, he concluded it's a con, a mere flirting game and was careful enough not to pursue a relationship with her. She left him alone then, but now she is back. He shares this annoyance with Amelie, and the two stage a conspiracy to end this: to lure that woman into celebration of their anniversary at a restaurant and explain to that coworker, in no uncertain terms, that Rudy and his woman are way above her league. Acting as planned, Rudy doesn't notify his coworker he will be with a girlfriend, he goes to work wearing a fine suit and makes really benign reference to (his) dining in a restaurant after the work hours. The coworker swallows the bait, and the evening goes in spectacular fashion. After a coworker approaches table with Rudy already sitting by Amelie, there is a really short conversation, and for the rest of evening it's just Rudy and Amelie. Next day, the coworker lashes out, and trashes Rudy's workplace, but there are witnesses to that act, so she gets fired. Good riddance – shouldn't have messed with people who are in it for real in the first place. They soon forget that person existed.

Inviting your lover or spouse into workplace may suffice, if it is possible. This assumes that your co-workers don't have any evidence that relationship between you and stalker ever existed, or their impression is it is clearly gone. Your act towards stalker should be clear, too. But not all lovers can be confided with, or for other reasons this might not be a good idea, in which case try regular Estrangement.

In regards to calling people with diminished workplace boundaries stalkers: while there does exist a line between predators and mischievous coworkers, these people deserve contempt regardless. Projecting danger onto person that won't leave pursuit can strengthen one's conviction to stay apart from them. Be careful with extending this beyond coworkers, though, and don't make expectations of being pursued when that has not yet occurred, or you may become paranoid. This projection is strictly for people flirting with you when you don't want that, and if the situation allows directly telling them to shove it, that is preferable.

5. **Suppressing inappropriate feelings without destroying extant non-romantic relationship**

   This too is possible, though only workable if interaction is not too frequent. The methods offered in this guide were originally devised to nuke both feelings and relationships from orbit, leaving nothing but wasteland where they once were, but a less extreme objective can also be accomplished. The situation is as follows: there was a non-romantic, distant relationship without trace of something more, but then one started to develop feelings towards a person, even though they don't intend to pursue a close relationship. One suspects this may be more than mere infatuation, so doesn't expect it to resolve by itself.

   The approach: execute Deconstruction sans pt.2, and remember you don't need to judge the person, you only need conviction against having a specific kind of relationship with them – a romantic relationship – but respectful distance that existed hitherto may be appropriate. Deconstruction pt.2 can be done too, modified to exclude only inappropriate form of interactions. Then establish private space to which the other person is not invited, e.g. share some of your hobbies or achievements with some people, but which you never discussed and will not discuss with that person. The latter works like Estrangement, but does not involve betraying a person – you are not violating their privacy, and the extant relationship never entailed sharing everything, both of you have the same rights to have private life separate from each other.

   As for having doubts about whether action is necessary or is overkill (for what might seem at the time like an easy “infatuation” case) – your mental cannon doesn't take scarce supplies to operate, so fire it at small targets all you want. It is way easier to tackle limerence before you can tell it apart from infatuation than after.

Not all interpersonal situations can be covered by this guide. If you are in a relationship with physical violence or coercion going on, your priority is physical safety and distance from the other person. This guide doesn't handle dealing with defamation, courts or legal advice.

The aftermath of using suggested methods

The methods are designed to result in complete halt of affection – cessation of sympathy, feelings and interest in another person – although this does not happen immediately. It is important to be realistic: these techniques do not

result in memory erasure, nor do they heal severe trauma that existed before relationship or limerence (and may have become reactivated by it). The scope of this guide is precisely defined to make abandonment of another individual effortless, preferably sooner than later, and once that is achieved, irreversibly.

With long affections or relationships, some time after a method was used, there is usually an experience of “sharp drop” of feelings, potentially more than once, with mind-wandering (a phenomenon commonly mislabeled “ruminations”) gone at the first one, and subsequent drops potentially resulting in gaining substantial contempt for that person of their past. Generally, if “sharp drop” has occurred, then the objective has been secured.[6]

After the affection was resolved, there may be things to clean up still. A break-up or even unrequited affection may transition to a state of grief. It can be addressed by the following: to identify what one strives for in life and attain it, and/or (re)using “Reasserting faith in one's own ability” step from Deconstruction, which can be done even if that method was not originally followed. That step is especially useful when one struggles with striving on their own, which is to be expected, for it if wasn't a struggle one probably would never end up in a limerence in the first place. It is not advisable to compensate for lack of attainment or manage grief by entering *close* relationships – it can make people end up in really unhealthy ones. This is not to be interpreted as “do not enter relationships”, nor implies a wait for the grief to pass before entering, but rather one should just ensure they don't cling to relationships for the purpose of overcoming some struggle in their life.

If occasional thoughts about the person trouble you, they also can be dealt the same way as proposed above in regards to grief. Otherwise, grief does not always follow break-ups or affection left in the past – it is just something to watch out for. Another concern is for people with severe trauma who might fantasize about the person of their past in attempt to break out of traumatic recollections (flashbacks, of emotional or “memory replay” kind). When “anxiety button” is pressed, one

[6] Assuming one consciously pursued objective in the first place. If nothing has been consciously done to the purpose of ending affection, this is not an indicator of anything, and limerence may yet return. At best, one may have transitioned into a state of grief. Depending on circumstances, such grief may later lead back to limerence, or may not; it is hazardous in itself anyway. At worst, the drop may have occurred as the result of saturation, after mind-wandering (associated with feelings of bliss rather than anxiety) that consumed all waking time, and lasted a few days, until one was kicked out of this state, because Nature has not designed us for experiencing happiness all the time, and biological mechanism exist that cause inability to feel pleasure to necessary follow. This is not the end then, but a window of opportunity to devise how to leave affection for real.

might discover that such fantasies (about person no longer loved) relieve it, but it comes at a price of some self-esteem and possibly more. I personally don't allow myself this treacherous relief. Nay, I rather tough it out, until my body realizes it is not living in the past anymore, by letting it exactly go through those other painful memories (not related to romantic relationships and ideations) without interruption from my side. Avoiding temptation – not allowing oneself to become fragile – can be said to be at core of this guide.

Now, regarding the structure of this guide. It is expected that one might need to consult it in a stressful situation looking for a solution, having already read guide before and needing concrete steps to get their situation under control. Hence I put the most required items first, so one can access them with a limited attention span before they get distracted, disoriented or angry. Placement was done intuitively, according to what I would have needed to get through the last challenging situation of this kind, if such knowledge wasn't in my head already.

The guide is practical: it is derived from practice before any theory. Solution to problems are often far removed from theoretical assumptions about causality. Indeed, the former are often independent from the latter and persist when the latter get completely revised. I have always sought a way to remove the source of unwanted feelings altogether in preference to other strategies. And I found falling out of love by willful decision a magnificent experience. All this is packaged with no strings attached – unlike academic works which are made for profit, this was made for the end user.

This work does not intend to fit with social norms of modernity, for that would compromise its utility. The core conception of this work is defined to be as follows: **ultimate goal of ending affection is in rendering pursuit to attain anything at all from that other person permanently inconceivable**. That is, self-determination not conformance. Then, if one had a strong necessity in something they originally conceived that person as a means to attain, they are recommended to either attain it in some different way, or to critically investigate via self-reflection such necessity and its relevance – e.g. identify what was this necessity derivative of (or instrument to), and go for the primary objective instead of a derivative one.

True to the original definition by Tennov, “limerence” term was used to shortcut something otherwise I would describe as “love affection”, “love as a compelling force”, “love spell”, “siren song” and “attachment”, with acknowledgment that infatuation and crush are *not* limerence (they are just too weak and require only minor dissatisfaction to dissolve themselves). However, the methods described

here precede my discovery of term “limerence”. I adopted the term to be more specific as to the kind of love the guide refers to: a condition one experiences rather than actions one takes.

The guide could have ended here. However, there is more to be told about love in relation to lifelong quest of self-determination, and it (love) also can represent a dangerous trap when one is failing that exact quest. I once happened upon a rather difficult case, which I can only describe as “what doesn't kill me, kills others”[7]. It was simply a “perfect storm”: occurred during political unrest (Canada during “COVID-19 pandemic”), no support net, a ton of social adversity, etc. A few people I knew – but wasn't on good terms with – decided during that time that the world is too cruel for them, and chose to depart from life. Those people never struggled with unrequited love in their lives, and were quite popular among their ilk. But I've learned to strive in isolation, so I beat back both limerence and other circumstances. In the process, I've discovered there is more depth to subject, and the second half of the guide is thus intended to explore it.

It must be realized that striving in isolation or adversity from others takes hard stances which some people will never be able to accept. Therefore I place this overview as a dividing line between general advice, which is not value-free either[8], but can work as practical advice for larger audience, and the deeper investigation into topics of love, existentialism, morality, society and self-determination for a narrower one. To continue reading is not a requirement, if you are well-served by first half of this guide.

Regardless of which option is taken, it is most important to gain one's own empirical knowledge from overcoming easier cases, before encountering harsher blows that life can throw at one.

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[7] “What doesn't kill me, kills others” is a phrase borrowed from a section name within “Antifragile: Things That Gain from Disorder” book by Nassim Nicholas Taleb, implying that one not necessary benefited from surviving a disaster, as much as they may have been able to survive because they were strong enough to begin with. In other words, they passed an “exit exam” but may have not personally gained from it. Per my own observation, survival may at times be predicated on past attainment of something that just happened to be relevant to it (without one knowing – at the time of attainment – that it would save one's life) or a lucky fate. Consequently, this imputes a certain moral realization, that just because there is a person who has survived some adverse experience, doesn't mean it was fair challenge or that it is justifiable to ever subject anyone to it.

[8] Value-free would render the guide non-functional, see “Appendix C: Essay on discernment”.

limerence
is
existential
love

An existential love?

Content warning: here I argue for critical inquiry into one's motives for grieving, turning rejection sensitivity into antifragility (a quality of gaining from shocks and chaos – the strength that is developed the more hardship one experiences, as opposed to resilience that merely does not deteriorate), mention O9A and make other controversial suggestions.

This part of guide involves higher-level concepts rather than those purely practical, yet it has not abandoned practicality. We are entering the realm of practical philosophy here, rather than concrete instructions. Here, it will be shown that unrequited limerence does not deserve stigma attached to it, being in every single way preferable over reciprocal yet malfunctioning relationships (those featuring violence, guilt-tripping, where goals of parties to relationship are incompatible, etc.), how it relates to the meaning of life and can be instrumental in discovering it, how to acknowledge and overcome hopelessness resulting from incomplete/improper resolution of limerence (such as through time and lack of hope, or by solutions offered elsewhere on the Internet), and emphasizes that insight derived from beating limerence is transferable to other areas of life, such as discernment in regards to which relationships to enter or to leave.

There are certain limitations to the notion of “existential love”. It applies not to all experiences, only to specifically limerence experience. Sometimes, feelings may be stirred by constant contact with the other person but not be limerence, they can be infatuation, they can be sexual feelings – of the kind one can use Estrangement or Eclipsement on, but to which Deconstruction would be ill-fit, because there is no “uniqueness”, no high importance attached to being in relationship, but merely a low-hanging temptation, like a proverbial “bird in a hand instead of ten on a tree”. The thesis of existential nature of love will not be applicable to those, but is applicable to actual limerence, or maybe only some cases of limerence – it's scope is narrower then that of this work otherwise.

Uniqueness as foundation of limerence

So, I've previously asserted that limerence specifically exists in so far some individual is believed to be unique, irreplaceable. It may be an unique role in one's life, some favor one believes only that person can deliver, someone who is believed to be the only one capable of understanding one's life, etc. If this assertion (illusion) is disproved (broken), deliberately or otherwise, limerence dissolves, and Deconstruction method is a way to rush forward this realization.

I got to this assertion through observing how limerence I did not try to fight gradually faded of its own accord once I've got to know person better and realized the few remaining things we still had in common could be shared with many other people. They just ceased to be unique, there was no reason to go for them out of all people. All personal experiences with limerence since have been consistent with this assertion.

Sometimes belief in another person's uniqueness can be unstable: at times accepted as true, at times not, in which case there will be discontinuous ‘episodes’ of limerence towards the same person. Anyway, it is uniqueness rather than idealization that sits at core of limerence – consistent with Dorothy Tennov's assertions in “Love and Limerence” work, an individual doesn't have to be ideal and often is not believed to be so (in contrast to infatuation). But disproving their uniqueness does end the limerence, while challenges to other parts of image which don't disprove their uniqueness, do not.

Since limerence is predicated on scarcity of something considered necessary to obtain, securing that relationship becomes a very important goal, and human mind is (it appears to be) wired to pursue very important goals a certain way. That is, to sustain thoughts and predispose oneself towards action related to obtaining that goal. Mind-wandering in limerence seem to be about 1) either rehearsal of ways to establish relationship 2) or digging recollections for evidence that relationship is possible. Scarcity of what is to be attained (alleged uniqueness of the person it can be attained from) is why this state cannot be – unlike infatuation – dissolved by, but rather tolerates and tries to excuse, negative experience with the person so valued. This goal is primary (regardless of how it was elected in first place), and the state of limerence is the mode of pursuing it, and contrary to the claim of Tennov, this mode is not unique to limerence, but is a mode of pursuing any important goal that one *presumes* to be achievable in one – and only one – way.

A relevant conjecture to the present work is that uniqueness of a person towards whom we experience limerence is always an illusion that can be broken. This conjecture understands refutation of uniqueness in narrow sense – in respect of what one seeks to obtain, rather than the entire character of the person by themselves. My personal belief in it is validated by looking at former experiences and seeing no evidence that would contradict this assertion, while a reader can adopt this conjecture out of two considerations: 1) it was hitherto true in all their past experiences also 2) to facilitate conviction to handle their present experience a certain way. If you, however, object to it, only one of the methods that was

offered actually relies on it (Deconstruction) – the others do not use concept of uniqueness at all, and are suited to deal with cases of affection other than limerence.

Even more general axiom can be elected (but fewer people will be willing to agree with it): that there is no such thing as an unique person altogether, at all and by themselves. I have seen numerous times people who were in different occupations and social strata and had different education background, yet their minds were clones of each other, down to mannerisms, quirks and religious beliefs. In one case a person I worked with completely overrode in my memory the one I studied with in university, so that I could no longer recall whether the two had the same name or was it different, nor could recall how an earlier person looks – I saw my co-worker (including her face, her figure) in all memories pertaining to that of fellow student. I've concluded universal non-uniqueness is plausible. While for me a narrower conjecture suffices, I won't deny the maximalist attitude provided by this axiom can facilitate stronger conviction in breaking out of limerence, if voluntary adopted as a principle.

There is a reason, however, for which these assertions are difficult to hold on to, for our social instincts are, in fact, tribal ones, and survivalism in a tribe would entail assigning significance to people around you. Thus it comes at no surprise that these convictions are usually remembered in reactive context and can only be invoked consciously: such convictions of non-uniqueness only make sense in context of big societies of modernity, where little value is attached to close connections and notions of duty.

Then the next question to consider is whether “romantic love” is an accurate description of this experience, for it only focuses on the external, culturally-influenced aspects of how person in limerence acts. “Romantic love” is for many a value-laden term that implies an immature or lesser kind of love, and as such attaches a stigma. By contrast, I want not only to remove stigma but to focus on the primary, internal aspects of the experience: why the relationship is pursued, and why it is so fixated on one specific individual. What is that illusory uniqueness, perceived irreplacibility of the person about, after all? What is the nature of important goals that are believed to be obtainable in one and only one way?

Existential not romantic love

The question can be illuminated by considering which other goals are pursued with the same fervor. For me, such goals would be of political activism, of struggle

for excellence and self-determination, a search for how to overcome finitude of life, to preserve oneself in posterity. So these are existential goals, concerned with one's raison d'etre. Another observation that brings us near the answer is that, in all those pursuits I mentioned, whenever I had unfaltering faith in them, I have not developed limerence towards anyone, but whenever my faith – in my ability or in originally sought purpose – withered, limerence would find its target. Furthermore, the resilience towards limerence during those pursuits was *in spite* of other people giving vane praise to somebody, or somebody attempting to flirt with me and make me fall in love with them – in other words, it was not that the potential object of limerence was lacking, quite the contrary, I experienced a lot of attempts to coerce me into loving someone, but none of those could penetrate thick armor provided by having faith.

Thus limerence as well as those pursuits are alternative (generally mutually exclusive) answers to a single existential question: concern for immortality. The answer is not fixed for all, but instead one comes up with their own answer, perhaps different answers at different times of their life. And for some, love may work as such answer, to others it may bring despair. Hence getting out of unhappy love has nothing to do with how others view experience, but with the quest for self-determination. Love is actually means and never an end. It was intended by Nature to be so, and is in fact true in regards to all love, not just limerence. Therefore, the question that arises when dealing with love is not whether it is "true love", but in fact following plural questions: what is the end, shall it be pursued, and whether love as means is adequate for such pursuit, and whether situation allows for oneself to use such means or whether they would result in one's demise. Love doesn't have any virtue by itself: all love can be harmful, to oneself and others.

In the movement or subculture called The Order of Nine Angles (which from now on will be referred to as O9A), there is literature relevant to the subject. Far from being a mere plot device or used to appease one's sensibilities, love plays important role in all four novels comprising "The Deofel Quartet". These novels are instructions in fictional format for those going through the early stages of The Sevenfold Way, which way posits its end to be wisdom and immortality. There are other points of interest in novels, such as aural traditions and the use of archetypes, but I will limit the coverage to relation of love to most important life goals (those with genuine interest may go on to read the actual novels, but will probably need to read non-fictional O9A material to fully appreciate them). "Love as potential detractor from other pursuits" is featured in the "Temple of Satan" novel, there it serves to move certain character beyond their unbalanced preoccupation with the

“dark” side. In “The Giving”, love arises from assigning a critical role to someone in one's life, and reader is left to wonder whether it impacts that person's judgment of a certain other character. In “The Greyling Owl”, there is not one but two lines involving understanding of love in greater context. Both are concerned with manipulating people with certain imperfections but valuable skills into position of influence, while correcting their character a bit. In one case, a person with a broken heart is guided to channel their darker side through composing music – phasing out limerence in favor of creative activity results in this (unleashing dark side) naturally, as I found out through personal experience. Another person of interest is subjected to a row of sufficient trouble so that they finally consider love and companionship as alternative to their selfish erotic conquests. For the main character of “Falcifer, Lord of Darkness”, pursuits of knowledge and sexual intimacy are intertwined (though there is nothing that resembles limerence, in this novel). Thus novels comprising “The Deofel Quartet” hint at how love can both impact one's life, interact with their pursuit of self-development, and how understanding of this interaction can be applied to manipulate others in order to achieve certain supra-personal goals.

In O9A literature, these aspects of love are not limited to being depicted in novels. The non-fiction book “Naos: A Practical Guide to Modern Magick”, which is one of essential texts of O9A, prescribes finding a companion who is matching sexual orientation of the one undergoing it, notably, a companion is someone who will undergo The Sevenfold Way as well, so there it is also not seen as merely “romantic” experience, but rather as necessary to progress the quest for lapis philosophicus. Breaking-up with companion can be expected to lead to practical knowledge of relation between love and one's quest for self-determination. This is not to be interpreted as companion being mere means to self-development – a view like that would actually create repercussions for the one who adopts it. I am just outlining aspect relevant to the declared statement about existential love here, rather than all things that are relevant (same as in regards to Deofel Quartet).

A non-romantic portrayal of love alongside existential concerns can be found in classic literature, such as “Anna Karenina” by Russian writer Leo Tolstoy (a later work than his “War and Peace”). I rather prefer this gloomy, lifeless presentation of love as it is portrayed in this novel – devoid of virtue – over unrealistically exalted poetic renderings it is so often occasioned. Although the titular character of the novel, Anna Karenina is not a person capable to find proper method to deal with existential crisis, to choose a proper direction, to make a difference like certain other characters try to. I consider her to be solely responsible for

bringing her own demise, for I view it as natural consequence of her committing two fallacies: 1) making “love” the meaning of her life, which made her paranoid in whether she is loved or is not 2) positing that the purpose of reason is to get rid of suffering. By contrast, other characters – such as Konstantin Levin and Kitty – although initially not very happy in love, obtain a better fate towards the end, much earned by their continued efforts to understand life. Thus, the fate of characters is not random: even though they are subject to many events beyond their control, the choice between life and death is, in my opinion, theirs.

My intuitive understanding about how search for meaning often entails looking for answers in very dissimilar places, is also the reason I never considered David Myatt's autobiography “Myngath” to be strange, but rather reflect the nature of life perfectly.

Still, my vision of existential love is not exactly represented in literature that I know of and can reference. I consider the strength with which one attaches themselves to existential pursuits to be a mere reflection of specific thing-in-itself, which I gave a name of “perseverance”. This perseverance is reminiscent of Arthur Schopenhauer's Will (that the world is) as defined in his penultimate work, “Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung”[9], but distinct from Nietzsche's petty idea of “will to power”. Rather than perseverance being consciously chosen resolve, this resolve is an a priori, and the persisting reemergence of “conscious” direction towards some raison d'etre is how we observe it. In contrast to Schopenhauer's claim that whole world is Will, I consider perseverance to pertain to only sentient beings, while itself indeed eternal and merely reflected in mortals in so far as they are alive. This idea draws some inspiration from O9A's and David Myatt's idea of living beings as nexions, and the idea of acausal. Additionally, I reject Schopenhauer's pessimism, and maintain that the whole Will (including perseverance yet more) must be affirmed, rather than resisted by asceticism, and that such affirmation is neither indulgence nor egoism.

The share of perseverance that individuals possess (or rather find reflected in themselves) varies greatly between different people. There are a few distinguishing properties observable in those humans high in perseverance, that they are averse to conformity (don't value group coherence) and to groupthink, that they love reason and care significantly less about being appreciated by others. The suffering they endure may also be greater than of those lacking either in ambition or need

[9] In English, this is “The World as Will and… Vorstellung” – I myself have not yet figured how best approximate meaning of Vorstellung and was not satisfied with extant translations.

for autonomy, but despite that they are less likely to actually kill themselves, even if they spend more time contemplating it compared to those who actually do. Schopenhauer's hedgehog dilemma (from “Parerga and Paralipomena”) also comes to mind, with perseverance being equal to inner, self-sustaining warmth of hedgehog who can avoid it (the dilemma). Although when talking of human beings, that individual may not necessary end up being recluse[10]. She might even become a revolutionary, if has other relevant qualities, although such constellation of qualities would be a comparatively rare occurrence. Another real-life scenario for humans is to not be aware of their self-sustaining warmth and reach out to others still, until they face enough adversity that they are forced into exile, and become aware of their strength for the first time.

Existential love is but one possible expression of such perseverance, available to all but those very low in it. While it may appear that strongest love would be the most probable cause of one's demise, because it takes a lot of perseverance to be capable of developing it in the first place is actually not the case. The striving that results from perseverance is not a matter of choice, but a certainty – one is predisposed to striving through adversity by virtue of embodying that much perseverance. Therefore one with a lot of perseverance is rather destined to thrive despite pervasive opposition from other people, nevermind unrequited love, unless physically fails to survive. Suicide for them is simply not a realizable option except in very unusual circumstances such as threat of imprisonment, so physically failing to survive means here either failing to ensure one's physical needs, illness or being murdered. Where do suicides “from unrequited love” come from then? From an empty life one tried to patch up with a relationship, then when the patch fell off, one was left to confront the emptiness that existed hitherto: a shock that made grief, and not limerence, set in. Grief is universal, a person low in perseverance can experience it just fine, including after breaking up, say, a nine-year long intimate relationship. This can happen even where no limerence ever existed, and even in person who never experienced limerence. The portrayal of Anna Karenina's longing (pre-adultery) does match the criteria for limerence, but her perseverance is still low, and her judgment is flawed.

A good metaphor of perseverance would be a train that is always guaranteed (by fate) to have rails ahead, no matter if the driver (conscious) may experience

[10] While hedgehogs aren't social, humans are, and at the same time more than that. One could describe someone low in perseverance as a “social animal” and someone high in it as an “*animal rationale*”. That's just one way of looking at it. Otherwise, perseverance is a gift from fate – to be capable of surviving what others won't.

a delirium and believe there are no rails ahead. So she'll live cause live she must, in defiance of others who hate her, and by virtue of living in such defiance will always find a purpose. For those destined to live, finding an expression of perseverance is inevitable, just as finding new purpose after losing faith in the previous one. Additionally, perseverance can be regarded as the *final* frontier separating life from death, which gets tested when all other defenses – including that of reason – failed. This way, my philosophy does leave room for preserving one's life through making better judgment, regardless of perseverance.

So, existential love may be phased out in favor of some other possible expression of perseverance, attachment to which would be then no weaker and of the same nature. But so far we looked at those expressions as mutually exclusive, that there can only be one answer at a given time, hence being in love not considered to be compatible with other pursuits (as in, two existential pursuits occurring in parallel to each other). This is actually not true.

If one conceives of more than single possible way to an existential goal, neither of which is associated with certainty of reaching that goal, yet both seem to some degree plausible, dissociation of consciousness will result, that is, multiple personalities will become evident (in this case two). Aside from arising as natural occurrence, this can be triggered by choosing third way in Deconstruction pt.3 (“Challenging the allegation of uniqueness”), which third way is to reach goal – for which relationship with another person was once sought as the only possibility – by oneself. The solution is in “Managing limerence until its resolution”, “Write a letter to yourself (if you want)” advice bit. It does not have to be a written letter, that is but a more practical option to most people.

If one is willing to embrace the following concept, they can go this direct way instead. The two personalities should not fight each other, but the more mature personality (the one pursuing self-sufficiency) should take responsibility for separating the “wounded child” personality from the unhealthy person they try to pursue, which also entails not treating the wounded personality disrespectfully, but nonetheless decisively interrupting their fantasies. Confrontational approach is counterproductive here – mutual animosity is to be eradicated, the personalities are to be reoriented towards cooperation.

Taking care of oneself is a crucial skill that should not be hidden behind ambiguous term “self-love”. It is more precisely elimination of, and aversion to, self-hate, that is, a principal rejection of negative thoughts about oneself. This rejection is readily conferred by virtue of defiance if one has it. However, the same virtue doesn't predispose one to internal agreement in a state of dissociation, as it is easy

to project the category of “other” onto the “injured” personality, as well as find enough flaws in it to desire its extinction. Neither “othering” nor self-compassion can resolve dissociation – it is solving the challenges set beside oneself that actually makes other personalities fade into redundancy. Whereas aversion to self-hate is a good idea, and I will definitely revisit it – as well as the concept of elimination – in “Appendix C: Essay on discernment”.

To add to the overall statement of limerence as existential love, sex or exclusivity is not a necessary component of relationship one envisions as a means to existential goal, as limerence is not related to reproduction, but rather to preservation of the Self, adjusted to a varying degree by compassion (not sexual passion) for another, as a Self-to-Self concern. Just as in self-defense situation (violent confrontation) sexual instinct is suppressed by adrenaline, we shall not be surprised to find it suppressed or diminished in limerence, until one secured reciprocity and eliminated anxiety about it. In unrequited limerence, sexual fantasies if present may be related to past unresolved traumatic experience (of severe trauma kind) and coping patterns (mental self-mutilation, or possibly kink), not to limerence itself. Their onset may occur after the other person expressed their rejection and made themselves completely unavailable, whereas non-sexual thought loops have been around before that.

Inquiry into nature of grieving

So I've observed (in my own experience), that on passing, limerence can transition to the state of grief – especially if one has not attended consciously and deliberately to limerence's destruction. This grief may even encompass a far greater period than limerence, or relationship, existed for. The question is then, how this grief be attended to, and what the purpose of grief is in general, understood from the perspective of the person experiencing it. The confounding factor is once again cultural interpretation – when is appropriate to feel grief, how it is appropriate to display it – which cultural prescriptions, like with limerence, interfere and disrupt healthy approach to its resolution. There is also a factor of recognising grief when it is no longer in acute phase, for its impact on the mind is continuous and hideous, but its presence may become visible only in retrospect – when it is over – until then, can only be inferred through associations it produces.

When cultural lenses are taken off, grief shall be recognized also in circumstances not related to other people nor to losing one's standing with them: like destroyed archives, one's home burned, wasteful purchase, helplessness in the face of disaster and so on. It results from a perception of an irreversible loss of something

that remains very important (including sustenance for person that is not self-sufficient), a lack of hope, or recognition of a failure that results from not having done something in the past that is too late to do now. That is, what is revealed is one's lack of foresight – *unpreparedness*. Grief corresponds to strong relevance of what was not accounted for – the acute phase thus always begins with a shock, the event that sets it in motion is a surprise event for the sufferer, a negative Black Swan, paired with realization of one's stupidity (fragility) or impotence.

The key to resolving grief – and yes, grief shall be consciously attended to – thus lies in identifying relevance underpinning its cause, and supporting oneself through the quest. I don't have a structured method for grief like Deconstruction yet, but I do have some suggestions that might help. For now, let's assume grief is related to losing a person – through death or break-up with no hope of reconciliation. There are three important cases to identify because they require (in my opinion) distinct approaches. Remember that for now we don't deal with cultural aspects – they do need to be accounted for but one must also know what they would strive for if they were free from the need to conform to expectations. For what is relevant may differ, from what common opinion would presume to be relevant.

Before we start: the suggestions might not be suitable for everyone – they are a hint rather than prescription.

The first case thus flies directly in the face of cultural notions. It is when one mourns because they lost protection of departed person, or some other kind of sustenance they provided, but doesn't care for that person except as a lost resource. “Self-serving” grief, so I called it, to signify that it stems from an unexpectedly selfish concern and thus one may feel even more readily justified in overcoming it. Granted, to recognize it against the cultural background requires self-honesty, which is not a commonly found trait. This case is best addressed by reevaluating what was sought, as to whether it is rational to still pursue it, and if so, to pursue it without person who has left. This does not imply, however, that such grief is easy to overcome, for if another person's contribution was significant, it is not easily replaced.

The second case is regret over actions that caused the other person to depart, which provided one knows which exact actions (this is never the case in ghosting, keep in mind), has moral value and indicates responsibility to change oneself. Note that I speak of responsibility, not guilt – there are a lot of implications in this distinction. Survivor's guilt may be related to this type of grief – in my experience, survivor's guilt is not irrational, but the contrary, self-condemnation for where

one *did* have real opportunity to act, but violated their duty or broke the promise given. The best way to respect memory of a person one left behind, is to carry lessons of the past and do reparations through practical deeds for the sake of others. One shall commit to live honorable life going forward, and realize suicide would not be repayment proper, but desertion of duty.

The third case is what, in case of death, conventionally understood: losing opportunity to act in a specific caring manner (including words not said, when one was still alive). In this case, it is also more readily recognized, that those actions that are no longer possible, are no longer possible, but some other actions to honor their memory may be possible, in which case it is best to think of those. For example, a deceased person who has, of their heart's calling, done great service to the community can be remembered by their contributions, which is much preferred over lamentation. Burial rites are also an essential part of giving honor to the dead, just as they are important to grief's gradual (natural) resolution. However, I consider the moral justification for this type of grief to pertain only to death, not past relationships. I can imagine someone to disagree, in which case I do not intend to change their mind, but in regards to myself, I maintain conviction that past relationships that concluded with a break-up should be let go of, forgotten, diminished into obscurity.

One may object to the difference in how I treat differentiation of grief (proposing my own classification) vs how I treated differentiation of love (discouraging it). This difference is justified, however, by what arises in practice from specifically value-laden classifications (neutral classification of love would be ok to me). For grief implies loss of interest in pursuing the person (even if they are alive), hence not associated with potential harm of violation of someone else's autonomy. Holding any type of love as a virtue in itself and using it as justification of actions that impact other people, on the other hand, may result in violating the other person's right to self-determination, because one believed they had good motive to disregard it. Worse yet, someone acting out of presumably good motive might not even share harm to which they subject another by such action, and thus never learn that they should not have pursued it. In regards to grief, the self-serving kind should be seen as legitimate to get rid of, but it is crucial not to rob survivors of their agency over survivor's guilt, for this subject already faced much misunderstanding, nor disrespect those mourning for the dead. My classification – or rather it shall be called outline – of grief is a hint about how the cause of grief may differ from cultural expectations, it is not intended as complete classification, or as some doctrine. I do not intend to proselytize or to argue in favor of virtue of grief, the way that some kinds of love are defended and others stigmatized

by certain unpragmatic classifications. The outline I made instead indicates a particular insight: that grief may have different causes and these need to be discerned by the person themselves, unfooled by popular narratives, so one can yet find a wise course of action for their specific circumstances – a perspective that is purely practical.

So with above outline, I served an example how what is relevant in grief may be case-specific, and that grief does not necessary conform to cultural norms or even arise in culturally-accepted cases. Reader, prompted by this, shall investigate carefully their case and not leave grief to passage of time. It may be that none of the cases match and you will need to improvise. In cases of material loss, think of what dangers you need to avert (if applicable) – in what ways you may have become exposed and how to fix that exposure. As for the cultural demands (which may vary across the world) in case of bereavement, they should also be paid respect – to avoid being alienated from one's community – even if one needs to put a “mask” in order to do this.

A note for those who may seek counsel for grieving in the classical philosophy: managing acute phase of grief may require self-consolation rather than purely rational reasoning, and is not helped by hubristic position that scorns what it thinks “effeminate”.

Grief related to severed relationship with living person, or to limerence “resolved” through passage of time, may skip acute phase. Chronic grief – let's call it such – manifests covertly rather than overtly, through daydreams about the place that is related to the person through some associative chain – such chain may include pre-conscious associations, so relation is not always recognized by the daydreamer. Or one may feel like getting a tattoo symbolizing heartbreak or the contrary, a heart with a lock intact as a protective symbol. They may not think of the person, but the symbols are indicative, and if one already established associations, shall look for whether they emerge in the future as they then would know their personal language of grief looming in unconscious.

The key to understanding chronic grief is that in this state, one lacks hope, so conscious part of mind does not work on the solution, for it is presumed impossible to begin with. An acute grief from any cause can progress into this chronic state if nothing was done, and time doesn't heal anything by itself – it just one lucks out in finding reason not to worry due to serendipity, the time that passes before this lucky discovery may be arbitrary. This is not all: after I had buried someone I cared about for the first time, I developed an unhealthy inclination to try to keep every person in my life from leaving, that persisted till I finally realized what

a mistake it was. Fortunately, had no intimate relationships that worked during that period, so I've avoided the potential damage this could have resulted in. An observation, thus: **grief can lead to adopting unhealthy ideas in regards to other relationships**. So, don't leave grief unattended, and pay attention to cues in daydreams or other symbols popping anywhere in your mind that may reveal what is going on behind the veil of unconsciousness. However, beware that haste in resolving grief can lead to making errors too. One needs to rethink their plans rather than reach out for recompense through trickery or minute pleasure.

Grief from limerence specifically is best averted by conscious attendance to end limerence, and if break-up or rejection happens it is definitely the wake-up call. If one wants to leave on their initiative, they shall reason through why they are doing it rather than act immediately on feeling – so as to have no unfinished business left in their head. So one has to find a new goal to replace whatever role the person filled or was supposed to fill in their life. Moving towards an existential goal is probably better guard against grief than merely disproving their uniqueness “in theory”. Then again, a person does not always have that much relevance, as Estrangement and Eclipsement tend to the cases “I just need out but this person drags me in through persistent interaction even though I don't want it when I am apart from them”, if they worked then there may be no need to do anything.

The reluctance to spend effort on tending to one's problems – such as one that may stem from perception that “it is overkill for this case” or “that person does not deserve so much effort to be spent patching for the wounds they caused” (in case of limerence gone awry, or being ghosted) – can be overcome by placing virtue in such deliberate and skillful attendance. You are demonstrating your prowess, and commitment to be prepared for future adversity, by not neglecting concern of eliminating fragility. If anything, this shall confer on you a sense of superiority. That is, whereas popular paradigms take away from your self-image, by depicting “romantic love” as lower kind of love, or grief as something that could never happen to an ideal wiseman, my paradigm does the opposite: she is wise who is prepared and capable, and she who is practical and does attend to resolving her problems, is prepared and capable.

Unrequited limerence and antifragility

First time I had to break up under my own initiative was after all the methods to overcome love were invented in my mind. So I used lessons learned in limerence experiences to initiate a break-up and walk away from them forever. I still

had feelings for that other person when I just broke up – feelings were not the reason for breaking-up, but rather I found a reason to break-up *in spite* of my still persisting feelings. I had suffered from anhedonia in the past, which eventually expired without any intervention – no medication, no talk therapy – so I've learned how to live when only suffering is possible. It actually had some blessings: procrastination was useless, so was unlearned, and there was no difference in suffering between running 20 miles under heavy rain and staying at home, lamenting one's laziness, so guess which I learned to choose. So, when making the decision to break-up, I was prepared to endure regret *for years*, to deliberately choose a path of suffering – as a necessary sacrifice for a gain I rationally envisioned and sought. But regret and insomnia only lasted a few days, and afterwards I never missed them. After all, I knew why I was removing that person from my life. I was also sure I will find a way to get anything without them. So I exercised my willful decision, and feelings expired soon.

I did not derive how to make this conviction for breaking-up from rational analysis of my methods. Instead, I derived that from raw experience that I later translated to description of those methods. The parallels between description of Deconstruction and the way to leave relationship I spotted yet later, when a friend talked about going through a divorce they initiated. She lamented that her relatives were not happy with her decision, while she wanted their support. I told her to remember the purpose to which she chose the divorce in first place: that she has a goal in mind, the divorce is a means to this positive goal, that offsets the drawbacks. When I came home then, I further realized that it was also similar to how I get out of unrequited love as well as avoiding unwanted affection that someone else is trying to impose on me. This goal-orientedness, that I first learned in one-sided love experiences, I carried across all of the situations, even those I was yet to encounter.

Among my former colleagues, there was a prominent negative example of a person, who on first glance would appear to be mature and capable person with a sense of responsibility, but in practice fell victim to exploitation by others across many scenarios. They lived with alcoholic partner for *decades*. They were mad that their co-workers are not doing enough and afraid that all will fail, so they took care of things that others should be doing but were not. Naturally, this kind of person is not suited to experience unrequited love, for that takes some self-respect to turn down leeches, to not be content with just anyone but be selective. Still, experiencing unrequited limerence means one hasn't yet found out which people are incompatible to them. However, it does give hard examples of who to reject sans theoretical assumptions and thus provides accurate guidance

via negative epistemology. Outside of factors that cloud my better judgment, I indeed confidently reject people I don't want to be with, and promptly leave spaces that outlived their usefulness to me. That workplace was one of those: things meant to break and fall apart must not have their longevity extended artificially.

Continuing with learning from adversity. In love context, I experienced guilt-tripping only once, but my love was fortunately unrequited and the dishonorable behavior of that person instantly brought me motivation to break the hell out of it. This way I learned yet another thing I will never accept from another person, across all kind of relationships. It's clear that other people often lack this valuable insight, even when they are better than me at something else. That's because insight gained from overcoming unrequited love carries over into reciprocal relationships – knowing the red flags, how to quit and never look back, and so on. So many people to whom limerence is alien lament about past relationships: in situation where their judgment is not otherwise clouded (like for the person in limerence), they are not acting rationally. By contrast, I eject people out of my life for a reason – the judgment behind this action is therefore permanent.

Observe that lessons gained from overcoming unrequited love translate to ease with which break-ups are achieved when they are necessary. This turns me to important concept that captures it: antifragility. Proper understanding of antifragility requires one to read a book in which it is introduced, by **Nassim Nicholas Taleb, "Antifragile: Things That Gain From Disorder"**. Like with "Love and Limerence" by Dorothy Tennov, understanding of the subject can only be gained by studying primary sources – avoid Wikipedia, people opinions, in fact don't trust my opinion either. But a quotation to define is needed nonetheless:

Quote

> Almost all people answer that the opposite of "fragile" is "robust," "resilient," "solid," or something of the sort. But the resilient, robust (and company) are items that neither break nor improve, so you would not need to write anything on them – have you ever seen a package with "robust" in thick green letters stamped on it? Logically, the exact opposite of a "fragile" parcel would be a package on which one has written "please mishandle" or "please handle carelessly." Its contents would not just be unbreakable, but would benefit from shocks and a wide array of trauma. The fragile is the package that would be at best unharmed, the robust would be at best and at worst unharmed. And the opposite of fragile is therefore what is at worst unharmed.

> We gave the appellation “antifragile” to such a package; a neologism was necessary as there is no simple, noncompound word in the Oxford English Dictionary that expresses the point of reverse fragility.
>
> Source: *Nassim Nicholas Taleb, “Antifragile: Things That Gain From Disorder”.*

Antifragility requires embracing some uncertainty in our life – and thus inevitable adversity – while managing to avoid those risks specifically that would bring ruin. But not avoiding risk per se – serendipity is necessary to get stronger and thus ready for future, unexpected challenges that could otherwise bring our demise. I didn't know, for example, that my experience with overcoming unrequited love would enable to say “goodbye” to someone you have been in relationship for quite a while and never look back. Antifragility enables one to prepare to scenarios they were not anticipating, hence its value.

An important realization from the original book is that we are, by nature, antifragile – until confused by ideas that facilitate fragility. One way to lose antifragility is trying to exert too much control on environment so as to avoid adversity – in this case, a mistake would be by trying to predict and avoid people one might experience limerence towards. For one needs to train on easier cases and during easier times to succeed against harder cases and in harder times. Hence, on the opposite, one must remain open to new connections, and exposed to possibility of rejection, interpersonal and social confrontation. Also, the avoidance is not practically workable if one is learning from those encounters: I don't try the same type of person twice, for why would I try someone who I already know – from previous experience – to be a mismatch? Then it becomes important to be able to handle social and interpersonal adversity without caving in, regarding which I will offer relevant advice to handling it in the “Limerence in society” chapter of this guide.

Thus when people convince themselves to have ‘just bounced immediately’ from rejection (usually by adopting mantra from their peers: “not to be clingy, to accept another person has the right to ignore them”), they might miss some important learning. A person who admits they have not immediately moved on after experiencing rejection gets a finer perspective on what kind of people – with certain outlooks, attitudes – won't be a worthy partner, or which actions they won't tolerate in a future relationship. If they also learned to consciously overcome limerence – to destroy feelings at source, to not let feelings interfere with judgment, and to move on by willful decision – that insight is transferable to many

life situations. Notably learning about what is not acceptable comes at a lesser cost in unrequited love than learning the same in established relationship. If one is then able to get over their unrequited limerence experience specifically quickly, that gain will be then greater than the drawbacks, hence place them within realm of antifragility. Even if it is not overcome quickly, this will be still learning from adversity, just at a higher cost. By contrast, a person who on the surface level appears to be resilient – not sensitive – to being delivered rejection message, does not gain any knowledge, but moves on without learning. Some of these "resilient to rejection" people then end up in abusive relationships, sometimes, even for decades. This is par the course: unrequited love is a shock followed by recovery during which better judgment may be learned, malfunctioning relationships are roller-coasters with no periods of recovery. Also these "resilient to rejection" people are actually duped by their false maturity (which is also the reason they *look* resilient) – they just bury a lot of suffering deep in themselves without consciously processing it.

A reminder needs to be made that people not susceptible to limerence are still susceptible to grief. First, because anyone can experience death of someone dear to them. Second, break-ups lead to grief, and notably those people who never fall in unrequited love but have left long-lasting relationships, are really bad at overcoming it. Indeed they would be, having had not much exposure to the stress of lusting over something you can't have. A fulfilling life (pursuing existential goals) likewise can be disrupted by circumstances beyond possibility of one's control: natural disasters, war or having to migrate in anticipation of said war. These circumstances would also defeat any hack measures aiming to prevent limerence from emerging in principle, that is measures elected to the sole end of such prevention rather than being connected to long-term (existential) fulfilment. Then, if one has never dealt with limerence before, or fled from such opportunities effectively, they are unprepared for the tough kind that can emerge under these circumstances.

It is indeed my point that short-lived unrequited limerence shall be considered a welcome stressor, which one doesn't go out of their way to avert from happening in the first place, but starts to tackle as soon as it happens. In fact I would consider it a cost-efficient learning? The point admittedly can be outré for those who were stuck in unrequited limerence long enough before, but precisely averting difficult cases is down to having experience with easier ones. If easy ones are being avoided, difficult ones may be next to impossible to tackle. In no way, however, my point shall be misconstrued as advocating for self-sabotage to artificially increase chances of limerence happening. Limerence is supposed to be

a spontaneous occurrence, furthermore, if one does at present pursue existential goals and so rendered themselves immune to it, they are *not* advised to leave pursuit for the sake of rendering themselves sensitive to limerence or otherwise, rather the chaotic nature of life is expected to interrupt them from time to time, bringing that necessary exposure. Self-fulfilment, however, should be done for its own sake and not for the sake of averting limerence, and nothing should be done for the sole end of averting limerence. That is, one doesn't go out of their way to find limerence, one doesn't go out of their way to avoid meeting with it. We follow our way, and attend to disruptions as they happen, and prepare for those disruptions to happen even though one doesn't know when they happen – just like a tech-savvy user makes backups or copies of valuable documents to account for the possible destruction of originals and the wear of storage, or like a survivalist prepares for the possible future disaster. As for people to whom limerence doesn't happen and the whole concept of it is alien to them, they will have to learn how to forget their ex'es for good without this stepping stone (good luck).

You must have noticed I don't offer means to win someone's love. Looking back at all those experiences I left behind I recognize it was for the better that I and the other person couldn't be together, for it would have prevented me from getting stronger, by becoming a cheat to hide from unrelated external adversity rather than me attending to its solution, reliant only on myself. **Knowing who is unsuitable to you without the cost of having had relationship with them shall be counted as a blessing**. What one shall be cautious around therefore, is reciprocity: a relationship with some people can be to one's detriment.

The path of self-discovery

In case there is interest as to how empirical knowledge behind this guide was originally attained, most of it (with exception of Estrangement method) was acquired in pursuit of self-transcendence, which was tainted to a significant degree by motive of revenge, and because of the latter I had bias towards teachings that are purely practical and reject *conventional* morality. So I dug materials published by that radical subculture known as O9A, picking parts from their Sevenfold Way to use for my own eclectic path, as well as notions “masculous” and “muliebral” as they were defined in “The Rounwytha Way: Our Sinister Feminine Archetype” O9A article, and contrasting them with the O9A definition of an ‘opfer’ as the opposite of virtue, established a virtue ethics system to live by. I did not affiliate myself with O9A nor contacted them for guidance, for such allegiance would have been irrelevant to my goals. But per my better inclinations – those not resulting

from desire for revenge – I also took interest in what can be described as David Myatt's “tale of redemption”, such as his personal autobiography, “Myngath”, his essay “Understanding and rejecting extremism”, and his other post-2013 writings, as well as his translations of Greek drama, such as “Agamemnon” (of Aeschylus), “Oedipus Tyrannos” (of Sophocles) and “Antigone” (of Sophocles).

Revenge motives eventually slid aside, but some practical things lead to formative experiences, so if I were to extract any suggestions one can voluntary adopt for their own eclectic quest, they would be this:

1. Run 100 km under 13 hours.

2. Infiltrate a long-running activist organization, whose views you oppose, with intention of disrupting it, by your own effort alone. Stay for 1 to 1.5 year – but no more and no less, unless you really succeed in nuking the organization for good. For the entire duration, you are not allowed to declare your true reasons for joining to anyone, not even to your loved ones – you must be the only person who knows your true intentions, while appearing to everyone else to share views and aims of that group.

If you are already past these marks, you should be able to decide what to seek for next challenges.

In training for the physical goal, set and achieve intermediate milestones, so at not to lose track of destination, as well as means to track your progress. Such milestones shall always include both distance and time threshold simultaneously (not all competitions are limited by distance, some are limited by time). Don't compete against a specific opponent but rather against the predetermined time and distance target – this is a practical way to entrain self-rootedness, fortitude necessary to go through life's hardships. You shall never slack even if there are no worthy opponents, even if you have to run some part of distance with no one running nearby you. Nor should you be carried by those who start 100K too fast for you, or even for themselves. Yes, some people may be just that fast, some others may be just stupid, and later fall far behind.

Suggested milestones are: running 26 miles (a marathon) under 3h 45 minutes (men) or 4h 15 minutes (women). Odd target times for marathon were chosen so that races won't have pacemakers for those targets. If you intend to use these tasks

as means to self-transcendence and pathei-mathos[11] like I did, you need to run your races without using others as an anchor. You can opt to run two marathons approximately two months apart, the first you target that time, but accept failure but still run to finish it rather than quit, the second you intend to now definitely come within that time goal. Later, try a 50K or a marathon in hilly/mountainous terrain, etc. Then multi-hours run that go beyond marathon, but are not yet 13 hours, etc. Or come up with your own approach. 100K under 13 hours can be achieved by doing running only – we are not targeting competitive performance here. So you can cross-train in whatever you want, and not necessarily activities that will help running.

As for how many years it will require for someone without prior running experience to run 100K, it really depends on the person. Some may succeed doing it under a year, though these are usually people whose daily job is a physical work-out in itself. I had 5 years of running experience at the time I ran my first 100K.

In respect of infiltration, it must be understood that an attempt at destroying a *long-running* organization is not necessary successful. They are reasonably defended and likely dealt with undercover agents before. Thus do not, under any circumstances, reach out to get help with bringing down the organization to anyone. Definitely do not go to cops, even if you discover something really illegal. Do not trust "informants" within organization, either – trust only your own direct observation when gathering intelligence. It also necessary to obtain some mental fortitude from setting and achieving physical goals first.

The infiltration task is inspired by Insight Roles[12] of O9A, those that entail political involvement, but significantly differs from them in risk/reward ratio, eschewing things such as overt action, developing a portfolio of "being a dangerous extremist" and association with illegal / easy to outlaw movements in favor of simple covert action that does not play by the System's rulebook and will evade suspicion. It is based on understanding that such political involvement is unlikely to achieve political aims or enable real positive social change, but results in practical experience with dialectics of conflict and insight into society, and modus operandi of activists especially. Engagement in activist movements will expose what those existing movements really are, rather than fake aims they declare and fake solidarity they profess, provide insight as to why other people choose

[11] Transliteration of Greek term, means "learning from adversity", or "personal misfortune can be genesis of insight".

[12] Definition of 'Insight Role' as well as the list of what qualifies as one can be found in material such as "The Seofonfeald Paeth" and "The Requisite ONA".

activism, and why certain reasons for choosing it lead to more harm to the world than good, as well as help define one's own stance for what one think would be a positive change to the world.

Must be stressed such involvement does not promote external change but results in personal insight. This personal insight facilitates discovery of one's authentic morality, which discovery is impossible without engaging with society, but ready answers from modern society leave much to be desired, so one engages in dialectical confrontation with it, and through such process, is able to arrive at their own moral code. As for why one would want morality for self-determination, will be covered across chapters that will follow.

Those who might endeavour to trace the source of my inspiration to that controversial subculture called O9A, must exercise caution. Some people – inspired by Insight Roles but doing political activism out of personal motives – bring their own demise. Notably, those who got arrested, ended up that way because of reaching out for help when they lacked strength to do it by themselves, and because of their need for recognition. They have failed hard, in fact, in grasping the underlying concept of The Sevenfold Way, of self-reliance and achieving things through one's own effort solely, and this failure reveals they have not actually upheld O9A standards and cannot be considered a part of that subculture. While my goal has nothing to do with O9A, I don't want to invite more such failures either, under my somewhat idealistic assumption that, baring some definitely lost cases, people can change for the better if they survive. Thus I put an emphasis on doing disruption by one's own efforts only, in secret, avoiding both participation in illegal activity and collaboration with suspicious agents or the state.

While these suggestions don't form a complete system, they contribute towards general hardiness and can prepare one for facing unexpected adversity later in life – therefore, if they are not done for pathei-mathos, they can be done for antifragility.

Ambivalence and akrateia

When you are fighting yourself between expressing love and being free from love, and can't settle on either.

This part of guide is about the nature of ambivalence: being in love, yet wanting to get out of it. It covers it from the purely pragmatic perspective – to translate doubt and ambivalence into firm resolve, which other chapters already tried to do. But this chapter also considers such question as: “why it is possible to be

in ambivalence", "how can ambivalence be replaced with a firm resolve" – the "meta" of what was previously covered.

The source of ambivalence is internal incongruence of the person in love: the conflict between desires or goals with supposed ways to attain them and social values, or between different goals (other pursuits not related to love). Because existing values and goals are not sufficient to resolve the conflict but are creating it in the first place, resolution of ambivalence only happens if a change is introduced to either, or both. This change can be introduced:

1. passively – by external circumstances changing so that goals are changed. This typically only occurs if circumstances became disastrous, or the other person committed some act that make them highly undesirable.

2. actively – during that phase of ambivalence where the attitude towards being in love is negative, one decides to strengthen their negative attitude. To that end, one seeks reminders, such as those posted in the chapter "On motivation and indecision" of this guide.

3. spontaneously – one reads the chapter "On motivation and indecision" out of mere curiosity, it convinces them to let go of present limerence experience they might not have even seen issues with before.

In the last two cases, the following happens: one now recognizes possible negative consequences yet to happen, and elects new goal – to avert them.

One may also be instructed initially by social conscience, and hold a negative opinion of themselves for staying in unrequited love, but that negative opinion is not effective in overcoming the experience and only serves to erode their self-esteem. To resolve the uncomfortable predicament, they try to reinforce their motivation to end it. If they then choose to consult this guide, and amongst the envisioned consequences they find something of personal relevance, that may transform into personally meaningful reason to overcome it. Their ambivalence would then shift to a more definite resolve. Or they commit to action and set in motion events that deliver them freedom, whether they still want it or not just prior it arrival. So this is how such things are possible.

It so happened I had a brief limerence experience while writing this guide. I was then working on “Appendix C: Essay on discernment” but decided to reread my own checklist for inspiration. Was fun to have my own checklist flip my position in regards to staying in love – then again, it was explicitly designed to do so and be rather effective at it, and more: to circumvent learned helplessness from previous failed attempt to break free from love, to directly turn commonly experienced issues into motive for action as well as the solution, etc. For I indeed wrote this for myself also – to protect my own judgment from the spell of love: to be able to see the ugly side regardless how pleasant the experience and how outwardly good a relationship. This instruction ended up being so potent it can invert a person's attitude, cause them to act resolutely upon the new stance and not to revert back – indeed one is unlikely to ever look back if young limerence is snuffed in its dawn.

I have no regard for those who make money off the subject of limerence or declare themselves expert on this subject. Looking for influence over others and/or profit, they have vested interest in ensuring their narratives fit to either current values of society or prevalent consensus in academic circles (for if their conception is outré they will lose prestige and/or revenue), whereas individual self-determination is not as important to them, if at all. Their results are at best, stigma and formation of subculture, at worst “12 steps”-like cults and monetization. While peer support communities have valid reason to exist (visibility of their experiences being denied by mainstream), they seem not to have the nerve yet to confront the negative judgment imposed by “work a job, get money, get therapy and (get lost) cease to be an inconvenience” slime of the modern world.

The present guide instead defines real goal as rendering another person permanently irrelevant to oneself, going well beyond intrusive thoughts problem (that does not even always exist) or self-control issues, while preserving one's right to dignity and self-determination. Direct-acting methods are provided to that end. The decision point per this guide notably does not involve attaching stigma to limerence (that would reflect back on the person experiencing it), but **taking a stance against having relationship** specifically, **determining it to be a threat to one's well-being** even if the other person is not necessary wicked (judgment of the person may not be stable under ambivalence). This is regardless relationship already exists or not – if something is not worth having it is not worth pursuing. Part of the suggested approach is also generalizable to basically all relationships one wants to leave and not look back – to this end, one employs reason to produce conviction, rather than self-shaming, emotions or validation from other people.

The guide, ultimately, is a reflection of how I do things myself. I consider it important to address the need for which one sought a person that turned out to be unsuitable. If one's focus is either on social perspective about one's action or the experience of thought loops, one might overlook “limerence resolved through lack of hope”, for limerence so resolved lacks intrusive thoughts and attempts to contact individual – but is not yet a problem solved proper, but rather a new state of grief, depression and hopelessness, which can only be resolved if the still unfulfilled need (that was the foundation of “expired but not quite” limerence) is identified and addressed. This may not necessary involve resolving it verbatim, one may reevaluate it with respect to identifying a more generic need this specific need would be merely instrumental to, find another way to fulfil the underlying, core need (an existential aim).

One could wrap it here, but more is to be told about **unstable ambivalence under time pressure**, if rather than having to engage in damage control, we want to prevent damage from occurring in first place. Such damage, for example, as contacting them or talking about them in public, when one already have decided to desist from that, including for their own personal reasons – to avoid exposing their own vulnerability to public. Under pressure of haste, self-reflection typically does not work – one's awareness is limited. This lack of conscious awareness may result in a state of what I call “haste-aggravated akrateia”. Akrateia is a transliteration of Greek term that refers to lack of willpower, which manifests in acting contrary to the previously consciously reached judgment. In case of failure of restraint, an action that breaks through comes from unconscious motives – including social ones, such as fear of missing an opportunity to declare love for the person and having no one in the future believe you actually loved them. There are other instances of a related problem – of deciding one way and acting another way, not necessary failure of restraint but also failure to execute action that one previously decided as correct and necessary, in which case one feels there is an unremovable mental block when trying to commit to it.

I chose to use specifically “akrateia” (ακράτεια) rather than “akrasia” (ἀκρασία) – the latter is already appropriated in scientific literature – to separate it from value-laden connotations, as I've found that akrateia, when not aggravated by haste, may prevent unsafe course of action, and that a failure to follow up some plan may pertain to unsoundness of the plan itself. Additionally, ἀκρασία is sometimes unfortunately translated as “incontinence”, to refer to “lack of restraint” case specifically but the word “incontinence” is loaded with medical connotations. In translating Corpus Hermeticum, David Myatt instead opted to translate ἀκρασία as “unrestraint”, but I also need to catch the meaning of *not* doing what one intended

to do, since my experience suggest that in limerence, unrestraint is preceded by honest attempt to free oneself but failing to do so *months* prior. That is, failure to do may predict failure to restrain oneself under pressure later: the different types of akrateia are correlated.

With regards to those other cases I alluded to, specific to limerence guidelines were provided in the "On motivation and indecision" and "Managing limerence until its resolution", whereas I have yet to develop framework to tackle the general problem, so I consider it to be beyond the scope of this guide. For now, in their regard I will just mention that the action one fails to perform (rather than to contain) may sometimes be blocked by unconscious for a very good reason: for example, writer's block may result from trying to write about things one doesn't know properly, or one can't relay their impressions of work of art to the artist because such impressions would make them very vulnerable to criticism of their preferences by that artist. As if unconscious had objections to what one consciously pursues and those objections were able to override the course of action, and some of these interferences from unconscious indeed are revealed wise in retrospect, when our self-knowing is improved to now recognize those objections consciously. But at other times, *the plan* we had made up consciously was indeed not sound, yet the objective was still necessary to pursue – the wise course of action was something else than we envisioned yet not inaction. It gets blocked all the same, however, and the experience we feel is exactly that of powerlessness – our will is overridden as if by force external to it.

Akrateia is distinct from dissociation in that in akrateia, one does not experience an existence of different personality. Akrateia thus appears as the split (contradictory motives being present) between conscious and unconscious, whereas dissociation is the split within conscious, demonstrating distinct self-aware (and in cases I encountered in my own life, mutually aware) states. But the actual difference may yet be whether one conceptualizes different "selves" or not, and one will be less so inclined if dissociation (or akrateia) was short-lived. Or it maybe that akrateia is dissociation + denial (of having conflicting goals), where denial is pushing objective that is uncomfortable to admit into unconscious, that is one hides ulterior motives from himself. Though not identical, these phenomena do have some relation, as social pressure – and especially sustained social adversity – appear to be a factor in formation of both dissociation and akrateia.

Regardless of what causes it, akrateia etymologically imputes meaning of "being powerless", and in all cases is experienced precisely as such, whether one fails in restraint, or fails to commit to what they envisioned. Hence why I think my

preference in using this word is justified: it results in correct identification without reading in any presumptions on causation.

From here on I will proceed to talk only about the haste-aggravated akrateia, the lack of control over one's actions exhibited under time pressure. I refer specifically to the state preceding such discharge, rather than an action itself. This state, besides contemplating in one's mind to both act and refrain from acting, is accompanied by physical cues: **hot flash, heavily pounding heart, racing thoughts, severe anxiety**.

This type of akrateia is unfortunately not counterable by attempts to gain awareness while within the situation. Instead, you have few options:

1. to flee / **extract yourself** from the situation to render yourself incapable of committing action you do not want to commit ;

2. to fallback on strict moral principles germane to oneself that don't need to recognize all details of the situations, but rather **focus on the rightful or honorable conduct** ;

3. to compulsively follow certain obligatory instruction placed before on oneself *outside* the situation because one anticipated it, except here this instruction is not of a moral kind: **follow a contingency plan**, which is a pre-arranged agreement with oneself.

In pt.2, for moral principles to work they must be those that are authentic to oneself, otherwise they will fail. There is another problem, is that not only self-reflection but also consideration of consequences doesn't properly work either – one's cognitive abilities are temporarily limited, even if one demonstrates exceptional ability in those skills outside context of haste. Hence, speaking in terms of normative ethical systems, act consequentialism doesn't work here, rule consequentialism – can't say for sure, deontological ethics or virtue ethics are pretty much necessary.

The problem with consequences is that it is easy to envision alternatives, and since ambivalent motivation is present, two conflicting impulses are looking for their support. One who tries to choose action through consequences will deal with thoughts such as: they might be helped out of their predicament by other people, be forgiven for the reckless action chosen, get public support, have their tragic fate acknowledged as an epic one, etc. Internal desire to back reckless action is strong, it *will* envision a favorable outcome, even if its odds are much smaller than

that of unfavorable ones. Being strong, it will actually override the weaker one behind non-reckless course, as it cares only for justification (an excuse) for action trying to break through. Thus, to block unwise action there must be judgment a priori, of the act itself, not expecting a reward nor compassion nor pity for the choice made – nor renown for being a tragic figure in some drama (think Nero's vanity in proclaiming “What an artist dies in me!”).

Example 1

A teenager Joe is enamoured with a classmate Jill, but she rejects his advances, and dates a jock from a parallel class. That is, until he dumps her. Distraught, she spends her time amount friends gathering to play guitar at the school's local club, where she “accidentally” take a sit near Joe's. When he inquires why does she look a little bit sad, she tells him her former boyfriend turned out to be jerk so they broke up – portraying it as if she left him, rather than the other way around. Joe notices how her face betrays a fake smile as she says so, also realizes he has hard time catching his breath. In haste, he tells her that he needs a moment, and departs towards male bathroom – but not on this floor, he picks a remote one. He looks himself in the mirror, and sees himself with a red face – not a good way to present oneself in front of... who she is to him once again? And who he is to she, so to speak? His pulse is rushing and arrhythmic. He realizes his mind is too scrambled to correctly assess the situation. He better leave for home. But he left his stuff behind, so has to go back. He prepares a fake excuse that mom called sick from home, asking for help, but doesn't has to use it – Jill is gone. Relieved, he gathers his stuff and departs, not bothering to present excuse to the rest of peers.

Commentary: this is a rather crude solution, but one appropriate for the age of characters in the story. Adults may get even more creative, in staging an act to get themselves a “rebound” person, when they break-up with someone. These rebound relationships won't necessary last, and people who would do this trick to “lighten” their own spirits are hardly a treasure anyway. From virtue ethics perspective, one wouldn't want to be a backup in case “I didn't get that guy”, and that is sufficient justification not to yield. People who threaten suicide or self-harm if they are not “consoled” may also be seen from virtue ethics perspective as not going through life with dignity – by allowing themselves to be so denigrated by others that they see no value in themselves except that which they reflect in their peers. They lack self-respect and on this basis it is justified to leave them behind.

Now, were Joe to be selfish and consider that his goal to be acting out of and fulfilling his desires, or were he eager to get what another didn't value enough, or delight in the opportunity to demonstrate his capacity to “empathy” by comforting her, he would have walked straight into the Jill's trap. The nihilistic, hedonistic or self-centered worldviews are all particularly susceptible to fall victim of haste-aggravated akrateia, or just prey to others' machinations. Ditto in regards to people who have something to prove to others (the person may be really selfish but gets their value from others' opinion and is dependent on it).

Can one give support to a person distraught by break-up, though? Yes, but this requires hard boundaries, commitment to defend them and being prepared for pushback in case this wasn't what the person wanted. What to say to give support would be to convince them the situation was not their fault and they were objectively hurt, and that the reason for their continuing distress is uncertainty: they're deserving of love just can't know when they find it again. Conditionally add that person who did it to them was a jerk, but only if sure they won't challenge that idea. “You can't let other people ruin your life, after all”. The final piece that is crucial is not to accept any intimacy under any circumstances. One has to have strong convictions here: that person could insist that your heart actually belongs to them and that you should follow what would make you happy – except I wouldn't care about happiness when I care about honor (and in case I am already engaged with someone, fidelity). Naturally, consolation via giving advice is only fit for interactions between adult people, it also may force the other person to reveal their true colors, so to employ it you have to have strict moral code, and these must be your natural convictions.

Take note that detachment (playing a role of sage or advisor) won't resolve this situation on its own – especially if you lack inner substance: you may choose to shield yourself emotionally but you won't shield yourself from consequences. Confrontation may happen, friendship may be lost – one must accept this outcome rather than yield to dishonorable demands. Some people really don't take well to advice – indeed giving advice is the best way to get rid of leeches and those who want to use you as a passive listener or consolator.

If one has not sorted their morals yet, there is still an option: having a contingency plan. Contingency plans – although more specific to the situation than morals –

must still be formed before the situation actually occurs. That means they are formed because one is anticipating the situation, which is realistic expectation in all situations where there is enduring ambivalence towards limerence observed over time in general, or if it just persists yet even if one took effort to squash it. These are the possible example of such pre-arranged agreements with oneself:

1. **"cognitive reappraisal to resolve the double bind".** If a person is acting hot-and-cold, I convince myself that cold is the only relevant, their true message, while the other side of coin I consider insignificant, irrelevant, and thus order myself to act according to only relevant information.

2. **"artificial barriers necessary to overcome".** Must complete (or win) several hard races throughout the next year before I am eligible to fly and meet my favorite person. (I expect that by the end of that year affection will already dissolve, as I am not otherwise actively sustaining it)

3. **"things must be done this way, but better not done at all".** If I am to contact her (a person I broke up with), I am to write her a letter necessary by snail mail. (Never wrote to her in the end)

I will not speculate as to how they work, except that they do. One's own mind, when in this type of akrateia, can't dismiss these pacts but honors them. It's like under temporary age regression, a child told to obey the command of a wiser parent – the mind that made these arrangements in advance – and so it does.

Compared to morality, however, contingency plans only work around situations that were predicted and which they were meant to contain. In those stressful situations that are not covered, should they arise, one won't have accurate defenses unless they have entrained themselves to valid moral principles. The use of contingency measures was also only tested in situations related to limerence – if one tries to infer advice about what to do when akrateia revolves around anger and perception of being trespassed against (the most difficult case), the answer is only two approaches would then be applicable: 1) flee 2) or act morally according to a priori principles – which principles you, however, must truly believe in.

Finally, there is a thing I call "telegraphing" – except it's internal telegraphing rather than external. It's a warning sign – often the last one before the action is discharged – and denotes either vivid imagination (playing the scene in your mind) or a night dream featuring you act out in undesirable way. It is one of the reasons I say write a letter *to yourself* but not to the other person, for – in the latter case – even if you think you won't be sending it, you actually made it half-way to

physically sending it. If you played out the scene in your mind, immediately stop and extract yourself from situation. If you wrote a letter not to yourself but to that person, destroy that letter. If you need to physically leave, board an arbitrary passing by bus or train or some other means of *public* transportation – so that you can't travel back as easily. Turn off your phone or computer and go for a walk, if communication occurs or could occur over network. Depending on the situation, might also leave the phone at home.

There is a lot more to akrateia in general (rather than to specifically akrateia in relation to limerence), but it would be obviously out of scope of this work.

Limerence in society

Per my theory, only two types of people never experience existential love: the self-sufficient, and those lacking in perseverance. Limerence in an uncultured person, however, could pose a danger to others: for it could negotiate away not only the other person's negative sides, but also their freedom and autonomy. Hence our need for cultural standards for expressing love.

The warning must be spoken then against regarding love as virtue in itself. For all I care aromanticism is a valid choice, as treating any kind of love as virtue doesn't make conduct virtuous in practice anyway, and may give license to acts that are actually harmful, whether because their impact is overlooked in favor of supposedly benevolent intent, or because it is never noticed in the first place. Respect and honorable treatment of another person within relationship are more important than attitude towards love: the virtue lies in self-restraint and acknowledgment of self-determination of the other person.

My further conclusion is that relationships best not be entered or retained for the sake of comfort, security or avoiding loneliness. They are to be built on shared values and goals. This also takes care of anxiety: there is now clear judgment of what is acceptable or not, who may have failed their responsibilities in any given situation, values can be appealed to in disagreements, etc. This is not infallible, but better, than opportunist thinking.

Value systems, however, might also justify tolerating what shall not be tolerated. This happens when they are inherited from social environment that had no

better examples, and the hallmark is they don't account for wellbeing of parties to relationship. This can be corrected by choosing a proper value system that accounts for those, and allows relationship to be exited as well if certain conditions are violated. A distinction must be made, therefore, between one's own values and what passes for “family values” in various political discourses or religious sects. This distinction is important, for, in practice, when staying in relationship is considered either the end in itself, or means to a selfish goal such as comfort of being in relationship or security, people also stay where they shall not, and have no moral ground in negotiations.

Example 1

Jordan, an office clerk, has a relationship with a wealthy businessman Vincent, but they don't live together. One day, when they dine together at the restaurant (on Vincent's money), Vincent tells Jordan that he has to accommodate two guys from another city the very next night who need a place to stay. Jordan gets nervous about that, but does not discuss it with his partner, but goes to vent on the Internet the same day instead, before the night actually comes. Here is what he writes, besides the story already told: “*I am super-anxious over that. I don't even understand, why. I don't understand what I feel. I don't want to live. Why is everything so bad no matter what I do? I want to kill myself. I think we have distinct strategies that he may be polyamorous while I am most likely monogamous or maybe at best polygamous, but very afraid of putting this to practice. We stuck together rather randomly… it just feels so good to be together*”

Like yeah, so good that he would rather kill himself then negotiate with his partner. He can't even admit of his jealousy, and he has no moral ground to raise objections, since relationship arose over convenience instead of over values. Thus not only he expects to lose argument to Vincent before it even begins, in fact is pretty much scared his argument would be lost to Internet unknowns, too. His motives to being in relationship are pathetic – he is slave to comfort, and stays in the relationship for it, and cannot consider abandoning this entanglement. And somewhat paradoxically, being enslaved to comfort leads to having none.

In absence of values, moral or otherwise, tolerance of significant downsides of relationship for the sake of very few positives may take place, same as happens in unrequited limerence. Except in limerence, there is an affect promoting

irrationality, but one inside a relationship has no such excuses, yet acts irrationally, when lacking in morality. At the same time, stakes in relationship are higher than in unrequited limerence experienced by someone who is single: ill dynamics in relationship exert far greater mental toll than unrequited love on their participants, and, in context of family, there can be collateral damage to children – if parents end up divorced, or children have to live in unstable environment, ravaged by quarrels between parents, and (typically) experiencing detachment from one or both parents. Furthermore, children witnessing such negative glimpse of what seems to be their future, may themselves become averse to marrying at all.

While values don't form an absolute defense against relationship falling apart, I would rather have a clear moral ground to define responsibilities within relationship, and so that I am ready to leave if those are violated. I am aware that values don't provide other guarantees. I knew of a man who divorced a beautiful woman who was infertile (and both wanted children), and then married an uglier one, because she was not. Or a marriage can be threatened by reciprocal limerence towards a third party, and one in limerence may both have reasonable reservations against adultery and temptation to give in. This latter challenge is not, however, insurmountable for those who discovered moral law from within themselves, rather than by adopting mores of society or through being raised in some religious tradition. For those who have yet to so discover, moral law may appear to be external oppressor, but for the one who has learned it from adversity, means to freedom.

For freedom means, not freedom from *desiring*, but from inner conflict (akrateia), from inability to steer oneself clearly in a difficult situation, and from poor judgment – from making decisions that are soon revealed to be short-sighted. Without morality, one has little to no foresight. Pleasure and pain are too plain an instrument to ensure human's survival, concerned as they are only with immediate moment, and opinion of others is misleading. Absent morality one is easily confused by others, deceived, led to one's own demise. So while the primary purpose of morality is to sustain society, morality is also related to self-determination. Morality is also not a matter of appeasing people or conforming to their opinions – doing so is called servility and is contemptible. An opinion of some social group or political movement, religious leader or some other authority does not represent what is moral and may actually be at odds with it.

The kind of freedom authentic morality provides also transcends the false dichotomy (and even the entire spectre) between indulgence and asceticism. This is a natural consequence of abandoning pleasure/pain dichotomy and refocusing on

avoiding fragility instead. In respect of relationships, **valid moral values would justify not just when to enter relationship, but also when it is permissible (or even advisable) to leave.**

Now, I'll shift the perspective away from distinction between morals and social conventions, to the situation of individual in limerence and potential or actual social adversity.

In state of limerence, I recommend not to solicit others to support you – go the way of self-reliance, instead. This advice is derived from the following real life observations:

1. Commiseration intensifies, not cures suffering.

2. What is actually desired in such cases instead is vindication (if applicable) or reinforced aspiration for higher status. If the person wants neither, they can't be helped, likewise, if you are trying to help someone but can't guess what they want and they are not being direct, you can't help them.

3. You might encounter pushback, mobbing, ostracism or other negative reactions.

So the way to get through is alone, and yes, it is possible. Here is a useful correlation I learned from experience:

The need to be appreciated by others is not unconditional, but diminishes when one attains personally meaningful achievements. Such achievements can also be secret works or covert action – the only requisite is succeeding at personally set goals. Thus "to thyself be true" can be practically enacted.

Through personal achievement, it is possible to reduce the impact of social adversity, which can be used to get through rough times of whole society polarization, such as occurs in modern world. Remember that not all claims of others have moral ground. Hence it is possible, to be an anti-conformist yet moral realist at the same time, for to act upon altruistic motives and achieve real results it is necessary to first reject the fallacy of groupthink, and identify what is actually beneficial, rather than detrimental to society.

This advice is not to be misinterpreted to promote career-chasing and avoiding relationships with others by one's own decision for the sake of mundane success. It rather cautions against getting others to acknowledge your true self because the

compulsion to do so only appears when you are struggling. It is not intended as a social policy, either: I am in fact opposed to shaming people for reaching out.

Forbidden love and being fair

Whereas rejection can result in high motivation to abandon limerence (destroying feelings and relationship), dropping out when feelings were not yet tested for reciprocity can present a challenge. One may be concerned they are robbing another person of agency and chance, especially if the other person have been nicer than their average one; or when relationship was one of care or professional, and so abandoning all interaction with the person means abandoning the former role as well, with connotation this abandonment may significantly impact the other person.

Concern about fairness is not limited to forbidden, immoral, illegal love – one may decide relationship shall stay within previous limits, and not change its character, for any reason they can conceive of: the person not being their type to have romantic relationship with, diverging interests and so on. So this can happen between two unmarried and unengaged adults. One suddenly recognizes they developed feelings for another before relationship began – and they think they fell in love prematurely, not knowing another person well. The objective then becomes one from “Other interpersonal relationships” chapter, pt.5 “Suppressing inappropriate feelings without destroying extant non-romantic relationship”. Accomplishing this objective requires mastery of moral matters, however. Because of possibility of akrateia, in *high-impact* entanglements the reader is advised to completely disengage the other person still.

When pursuing relationship would be breaking a law, that is sufficient reason to desist from all contact with that person, and make arrangements to that end (referring them to another therapist, teacher, or oneself getting reassigned, etc.) In those contexts, the moral obligation is clear: you don't have to concern yourself with their feelings if you must respect a much greater social responsibility. Even in contexts not this sensitive, if your mental condition became fragile for any reason – for example, you experienced much social adversity or interaction with many people whose values are radically different from yours – then you are susceptible to akrateia and purging feelings at the very least is necessary measure to contain the vulnerability. If you don't, greater damage to the other person will result from failure to act in restrained manner than by abandoning them completely, yet alone than if you chose to merely erase feelings. And still, if you befriend a person about to come out of late adolescence and into adulthood

proper, there is a high chance that their values will change and this friendship won't endure.

Even in adult relationships, consent is not enough if we are talking crossed entanglements: when you are engaging the same person both in intimate relationship, and through a social role defined around some abstract, impersonal goal. It is worse when as defined by social role the status is unequal: i.e. a boss and subordinate employee. It wouldn't be incorrect to adopt the paradigm that, between two persons of status disparity, there are no such things as ‘consent’ and ‘adulthood’ – only exploitation. This goes regardless of gender: for perception of women as ‘tender’ is invalid and stems from lack of self-honesty (both for men and women) – it is possible to be abused in a lesbian relationship. Legal status of adult doesn't mean one may not be engaging in cope – in modern society, there are plenty broken individuals. Even for otherwise healthy (as in mental health) individuals this may change when they undergo substantial adversity and alienation from their support network. As such, crossed entanglements are another reason to forego concern of reciprocating being nice for such entanglements are inherently fragile – one must continuously compartmentalize to avoid becoming dependent and fulfilling that need through such entanglement, in which professional and personal lives begin to blur, and intimacy gives in to neuroticism (if not psychopathy) and compulsions.

Compartmentalization has a cost, and this cost *will* become noticeable when things go south (whether in professional or personal life). You might still retain the capacity to compartmentalize, but it will exact a toll on you when you are already strained. When you must attend to other things, the continued effort will drain you of resources you need elsewhere. If you take this risk, you gamble on that trouble will never happen: e.g. that your career will remain forever secure, that you will be able to navigate divorce with ease, that alimony's impact (if applicable) will be negligible, and so on. Reducing mental burden by avoiding crossed entanglements shall always be preferred – when crisis arrives, you will have less on your plate to deal with.

Appendix A: An early attempt at resolving ambivalence

This story demonstrates a controversial idea along the way: cognitive reappraisal can be no less effective as a foundation of dissociation and solipsism then flat-out denial of reality. Effective in this sentence doesn't have positive meaning, but the contrary. Some practical value can be extracted from this lesson nonetheless, although my original intention when writing it (for some other work, actually)

was to refute the view that cognitive reappraisal is necessary adaptive. I guess it doesn't hurt that I'm edging on the boundaries of permissible here, as I do this demonstration. The situation described in this account chronologically occurred before I invented any methods offered in this guide.

When I was a teen, I had to manage feelings towards a person who sent mixed messages with their words and actions and who was in constant contact with me, and I have not yet created Estrangement technique or other, for that matter. The feelings were overwhelming, but I distrusted the person (we had rather different social backgrounds) and she was a girl that I thought was straight, and I thought myself straight. Regulating feelings was always difficult for me, but I had to act smart somehow and not try to pursue her. I remembered then, an excerpt from math encyclopedia – my parents kept a home library – that impressed me as a child: it described an algebraic equation with real number constants, and the answers were also real numbers, but the solution employed the use of imaginary (or complex) numbers in the middle of it. The concept of it was intriguing: one could use imaginary things to produce real results. Given that I was struggling with my reaction to situation, I thought how I could temporarily tamper with my perception of it, so that my existing rather rigid patterns of behavior, when interposed on this altered perception, would produce desirable results. The source of that perception I believed then to be founded in memories, so my first cue as to the solution was to alter my memories somehow, yet for safety's sake in a reversible way. In terms of what I spoke of in “Ambivalence and akrateia”, I was thinking of a contingency plan, since I was not yet mature enough to reinforce my own morality, mistaking as I was morality for parents' vision of right and wrong.

Tampering with memories, though? That sounded familiar. I recalled that in “Nineteen Eighty-Four” by George Orwell, O'Brien talks about the Party's practice being collective solipsism and draws parallels between it and solipsism proper, and I pondered the thought, what would be an individual solipsistic counterpart to “doublethink”. First step I identified was to recognize my own memories as my property, which I can bend at will, and even do so safely so long as they are not contradicted by narrative presented by other people in reality. The question was to how then limit the possibility of contradiction – and for that, I concluded, it is best not to alter the content, but relative relevance of the granular facts that could support different, opposite conclusions – and choose to assign relevance to those that would uphold the desired course of action: to walk away from relationship. So, when that person was acting cold to me in my memories, that I assigned “relevant”, and when she was warm and welcoming I relegated to “irrelevant”.

Thus, I constructed my interpretation of reality using cognitive reappraisal rather than denial or alteration of facts.

The solipsism in this setup lies in choosing specifically that interpretation of reality – among multiple possible – that facilitates practically pursuing needed outcomes. The confidence in alternate possibilities is then diminished, justified by the need that success relies on faith in the validity of only one interpretation. There remains a slim chance of this interpretation to be contradicted by future events. As such, back then I needed to make sure I can't reevaluate these when in proximity of that person – the decision what to consider relevant or irrelevant was to be fixed and imperative.

To this end, I came up with idea of controller personality – being a private personality that has direct access to facts and can review its own decisions as to their significance – and a puppet personality for interacting with other people, the puppet must at all believe what it is told by controller to believe, without question. Therefore, puppet's perception of reality is shaped by controller, and puppet's actions will then correspond to this perception. With this setup, I retained memories over my decisions in controller personality, for reflection at maybe later time in life, whereas the puppet personality was neither able to reflect or change them, and had to behave as predicted by beliefs imposed on it: avoid the relationship with that person, because they (that person) are considered mischievous.

I managed to refrain from making an unsuitable love confession then. However, not so long after, in my sleep I saw a dream where I was a terrorist and took them hostage, like in Rammstein's video on their song “Ich Will”. This, I realized, indicated they[13] were still somehow relevant to me. Either way, it was clear then my previous success was only temporary and I needed to find a way to render them irrelevant for good. Since first solution was inspired by “Nineteen Eighty-Four”, the second was inspired by it as well – and was indeed how I created, for the first time, the Betrayal method. The execution of the Betrayal method erased the personality split as well, because with the purpose now served in another way and also more robustly, the split became obsolete.

That was a story of how cognitive reappraisal – a reevaluation of significance of certain cues and events – can go a long way, if unchecked, and how solutions

[13] On pronouns: one may notice that in the beginning of the story I use ‘she’ pronoun, but towards the end after having reached the decision, ‘they’ pronoun. This was not intentional, yet upon spotting it I decided to keep it that way.

derived from it may be transient. It would be a mistake, however, to refrain from transient solutions altogether, if a permanent one is not yet conceived at the time. That I withheld the confession of ‘love’ – which to date I think it was the right thing to do – bought me some time to look at bigger picture, and come up with a way to completely eliminate feelings and relationship. It is possible I would not devise the latter without first coming up with the former. The problem being resolved proper also got rid of dissociation by rendering it irrelevant, thus no net downsides resulted from the setup. Later, I would discover a way to perform contingency setups without dissociation, by placing obstacles or challenges to complete before considering oneself having earned – granted permission from myself – the right to engage the person, although these have to be planned in advance rather than conceived very near possible engagement.

Regardless, a filter – when a person is acting hot-and-cold, cold is the only relevant signal – is a good idea. In “Managing limerence until its resolution” I gave actual reason to always reject those who act hot-and-cold, without exceptions. One adopting it in their core values would not need to dissociate even temporarily: for it would then move from the realm of contingency measures to realm of moral disposition.

Deconstruction pt.1 is notable for being a strictly adaptive version of cognitive reappraisal, which, among other things, can remove “hot” misattributed to a person that in fact came from other sources. It avoids solipsism trap because it does not try to read another person's mind – it involves recalling material facts about circumstances instead.

Appendix B: Resolving limerence founded on envy

Brief reminder of the steps used in Deconstruction, which are showcased in this story:

1. **Removing obstacles to better judgment.**

2. **Remembering reason for leaving.**

3. **Challenging the allegation of uniqueness.**

4. **Reasserting faith in one's own ability.**

Thomas is a lead developer in big software development company, passionate, responsible, but with a somewhat childish character when it comes to social

communications. Cassandra is a relatively new employee who just got a degree in IT and is pursuing another degree in economics, was hired as a secretary but now transferred to department of project management as a trainee. She is assigned to handle communications with client companies on non-essential projects as of yet, but she is highly ambitious and her immediate boss as well as a CEO recognize and shower with praise everything related to her: her ambition, her personality, her academic success, her skills including her fluency an English, that even rivals that of Thomas. She also, unlike Thomas, has a natural dominant personality, and although Thomas is 27 and Cassandra is 21 it feels more like the other way around to him, she being just so much mature. Despite her projecting a strong aura of confidence, Thomas initially despises her, for her work attitude is irresponsible, as if she is thinking that world owes her already because she just got a degree, and sees her as spoilt by her mother being rich, which surfaces in her references to her mother's status here and there.

The two end up being assigned to the same project, and Thomas feels uncomfortable working with her. One day he calls her immediate boss – who is friends with him – and tells her he can't work with this woman anymore, and that he will resign from the company if he has to keep working with her. The boss calls Cassandra immediately afterwards and harshly interrogates her about what she could have done, but Cassandra honestly does not know the answer. Next day, the two stay apart from each other, and the boss arranges one-to-one meeting with Thomas in conference room. She intends to convince him to stay, as she is aware that Cassandra is already seeking a job at some other company, that has less career prospects but is better paying. She doesn't disclose that to Thomas, but hints to him that maybe Cassandra will see that the job of project manager is not really her calling. Thomas, however, remembers too well how everyone was showering Cassandra with praise, and interprets it as being manipulated into accepting Cassandra as his superior. When Thomas is told that Cassandra lost her sleep over that call, he nonetheless feels sorry for her and admits that.

The next day Thomas and Cassandra reconcile, and Cassandra gives him her phone number. But, a week after, Cassandra resigns from the company. They still have occasional phone conversations for a while, but then she blocks him, permanently gone from his life. Thomas realizes that he misses her, in fact, fallen in love with her. But gone is gone, and when he begins to develop depression, he realizes the need to rid himself of this hopeless affection.

What interferes with his perception of this situation **(executing pt.1)**, is akin to Stockholm syndrome. Both had a tense conversation with a manager, so

there appeared some similarity in their circumstances, and the fact that the girl suffered (lost her sleep) made him commiserate with her. While at the same time, Cassandra wasn't removed from the team, but left later on her own volition, so for Thomas, there was also being stuck with her, being at her mercy in some way. He can remember why he did not appreciate her before – for a senior worker like him, she was irresponsible, he looked at her from professional perspective, rather than as at a prospective partner, and quite honestly, it was the right thing to do: to look at a coworker from professional perspective exactly. He knows why he must let her go **(executing pt.2)**: because they did not naturally get along, their values are incompatible, the temporary "peace treaty" has been but a strained compromise, and now a tainted memory, something to not look back to. Most likely, she has made friends at new workplace and already is not looking back, but if she did not, she would resent her old workplace for not giving her opportunity to strive in it.

As to how did she become unique to him **(executing pt.3)**: the envy of another person's success is irrational. That person is never the only one in the world who is that much successful or fortunate, yet to protect one's own ego, one recognizes being defeated only by that one person. There definitely must be more people in the world more successful and fortunate than Thomas – maybe some even within his circle. His road to break out of limerence is to face up to that reality – to clear all things that block its perception. Among other things, this means to realize that his workaholism he is so proud of only makes him susceptible to exploitation. Besides, Cassandra by herself would never had maintained that work attitude for long – it was the decision of his employer to allow her that much freedom and acknowledgment of her ambition.

Although it is not an easy realization to rush, that it would happen is inevitable. Passage of time would deliver Thomas out of this limerence by exactly making him face up to these things, except at a probably less fortunate time. Thus it is a wise decision to force this realization to happen earlier rather than later.

As to how Thomas might reaffirm his faith in his own ability **(executing pt.4)**. He might look at his own life in general, especially his out-of-work achievements which he attained alone, by himself, without help from other people. He might envision a multitude of opportunities open to him if he is willing to take effort: he might secure a better job, become a freelancer, a self-employed professional, build his own company, use his savings to retire, purchase some land and live a simple but self-sufficient life and so on.

Appendix C: Essay on discernment

This essay is an excerpt from my work in progress called "Theory of Action", trimmed down to essentials. It is a fairly advanced subject – don't expect an easy read.

The crucial precursor to any action is discernment. Desire, or rather necessity, is not action's sole determinant nor is sufficient, while discernment (say, of the moral or virtue kind) can also become a source of necessity, as well as break a tie between necessities that require opposite actions to pursue, or would cause mutually exclusive outcomes.

What is discernment? Discernment is **value-laden judgment**, the telling things apart from each other, the imposition of preferences and aversions, the distinction between relevant and irrelevant, acceptable and despicable, safe and hazardous. Most importantly, discernment implies making a choice between things not necessary true or wrong, possibly even without justification for such choice, or without even attempting such justification and rejecting any need for it. Discernment may elect to invoke logic, but logical judgment is not a discernment by itself, and can only be subsumed by it, becoming a means rather than the end, an instrument, the answers provided by which need not have a final say. Without value judgment, physical action won't happen – facts by themselves are not sufficient. Finally, if some course of action is indeed committed to (which commitment itself results from pure value judgment), values direct its execution, as well as whether it ends up being self-consistent or lacks this property.

Recall Buridan's ass “paradox”, which states that a hungry donkey positioned perfectly in the middle between two stacks of hay will necessary die. This is not the case in my philosophy: a preference for going left before going right is sufficient to break the indecision, for left and right are not the same, but to the different sides and thus distinguishable. Therefore, placing my donkey in place of Buridan's, it does not starve, just like the makers of the “paradox” with all likelihood believed it wouldn't, for this has never been observed in reality – the “paradox” was actually made to mock Buridan's deterministic philosophy, which (philosophy of Buridan) attempted to state that everything is predicated upon “desire” solely, as if “desire” acted akin to physical force of gravitation.

The donkey doesn't need to know abstract concepts of “left” and “right” to have such preference as I described. For hadn't it learned to find food when none was in sight, and thus developed habitual preferences for how to approach pathfinding? Had it never observed sun rise, and always do so on one side and descend down on another? It must have knowledge about sides, a wordless discernment. It also likely developed preference to move rather than not, when hungry, therefore, in event of initial indecision and no strong empirical affinity towards one of sides, hunger would provoke donkey to at least move in some direction(s) initially, which after few such seemingly random steps would unsettle the “equilibrium” by pushing it closer towards specific stack of hay, if it does not trigger habitual preference for a direction earlier than it even starts to care about changed circumstances.

The variation of “paradox” with the hay and water (and presumably *equally* hungry and thirsty donkey) produces even more asymmetry – the unpleasantry

of eating with dry throat makes for clear preference to fetch a drink first. If talking real world, sunshine could also impact which direction is preferable, whether one goes a straight path or wanders through the shadows. To humans, knowing that thirst kills faster than hunger could be grounds for preference in some similar situation. Whereas a skeptic may remain unconvinced by these statements, a wise person will take the cue about **exercising their preferences without rationalization, in order to survive**. For the real objective is not in each meal, like paradox asserts, but in surviving, which can be helped by imposing a priority ordering between meals however one sees fit – distinction so produced may seem to observer pretty arbitrary, but what matters to an observer is not relevant to the one whose survival is endangered. Importantly, such priority ordering can completely replace assessment whether meals are equivalent from distance or whether they are at equivalent distance, for both such assessment and priority ordering are mere instruments to some goal (which in this specific case is survival), and if some instrument is inconclusive, it can and will be supplanted by another so long as one is conceivable (or produced by instincts, as in case with donkey and habitual approach to pathfinding). For human, tossing a coin would be but one way to priority ordering, a stubborn and non-rationalizable preference for how to number sides will do just as fine.

Likewise, a necessity one does not know how to fulfil does not result in action, if one doesn't even know where to begin, or exhausted all options they could conceive and can conceive of no others. Additionally, one may have ambiguity towards necessity itself, which seem to happen mostly when it was imposed on them by someone else (including society or abstract “other”), rather than arisen from within. Those are *real-world* cases of having a task but not doing it – of akrateia – as opposed to imaginary “paradox” involving donkey.

Thus other variables being equal, discernment can make a difference between action and inaction, and is not derived from one's present circumstances alone. Then the question is, what is the basis of discernment?

I allege there are multiple distinct sources that give rise to discernment, and that they are not predicated on having “free will”, and thus independent of any assertion made about its existence, and would be compatible even with strong determinism. Discernment can come from instincts – avoidance of rotten or smelly food. It can come from experience – more ready to perform certain actions, thus if there are two objectives of equal value, but one requires an approach that is more pleasant to oneself, it is chosen. Or one knows what hurt them or failed them in the past, so avoids it or doesn't try that approach, even in a different context. It

can come from values, be those of moral nature, or otherwise (for example, faith in one's ability), individual or collective. It can be affected by coercion – someone persuaded into doing something their senses could caution them against, but because repulsion was not high enough, it could become overridden by confidence of others. Discernment in general, and thus value systems also, are able to have an impact on action and inaction, and might effect the difference between hesitation and eagerness – how rapidly one has the capacity to act, or whether one's actions converge to securing the objective or lead one astray.

Discernment in sleeping brain

Even in dreams one can recognize discernment transpiring on unconscious level – assuming one has already observed in their own experience the patterns that I am going to state. Sleep, I figured, is about memories maintenance, with dreams a by-product of it. Dreams, in turn, appear to feature that content which is relevant, but not given enough attention during preceding waking hours. And dreams, I noticed, never feature irrelevant content, nor something relevant that is already receiving sufficient waking consciousness attention.

For example, whenever I experience limerence, I almost never see that person in my night dreams, who is subject of my day-time mind-wandering, although mind-wandering related to limerence may seize me as soon as I wake up (this observation already noted in Tennov's work). Hence, the unconscious housekeeper of our memories, appears to possess discernment already, being able not only to distinguish relevant from irrelevant, but also “well-preserved in memories” vs those that are not, dreams featuring only relevant but not well-preserved, that need to be rehearsed and retained. A similar mechanism might be behind intrusive thoughts: focus is sustained on what is highly relevant, although here it is not a memories process, but can be rather the pursuit of a goal, oriented towards future (if, say, in limerence), or the desire to avert something unpleasant in the past from being repeated in the future (which is behind at least a subset of trauma-related thought loops and involuntary recollections).

It is possible to actively extract practical value from this mechanism, to achieve what may feel like ‘**communication with subconscious**’. I do it in the following manner: when pondering some thought, an interesting idea may occur – a question to which I do not yet have an answer – I will skip it but register a mental note of it, and that way it will become a “letter”. An answer will emerge later, either as a sudden epiphany on some other day during waking hours, or presented in a dream. If no request was made, one can still recognize in their dream that concern

which fled or was chased out of consciousness previously, which could happen when, for example, one had to be polite in a previous conversation and ended up suppressing some thoughts internally also. Some dreams may have a moral meaning, present a judgment of one's character, especially those parts which one tries to deny, but sometimes also those one wishes to know in earnest during waking hours, but cannot easily know because they involve some hypothetical situation that has not yet occurred in their life. The moral concerns are this way revealed among those relevant, being frequent guests to my dreams, which means even a sleeping brain can distinguish that which is moral and virtuous from that which is contrary to morality and demonstrates a lack of virtue.

However, it is conscious discernment – one attended to, and alterable, through faculty of reason – that is intended to be the focus of the present treatise.

Conscious discernment and how to improve it

In “Overview of the present work”, I left a footnote, that “**value-free would render the guide non-functional**”. Indeed, I experimented with it (in a draft afterwards discarded): made an attempt at reducing bias, tried to eliminate even implicit values and to still make convincing point about undesirable consequences of staying in love affection. But then I realized two things: 1) that is not how I actually obtain conviction to get out of affection, for I really do make swift judgment of drawbacks to having or preserving relationship with that person 2) proving certainty of consequences is impossible, for through, for example, luck or misfortune, they can be different. Someone might get away with that which will be deadly for another, and not even because the former was stronger than the latter, but because their social group was supportive, and for another it was not, so the first could get away soliciting help from others, another got only into more trouble doing the exact same things as the former. How do I tackle it? I prepare for the worst outcome, and this is reflected in the kind of advice I give – biased towards expectations of social adversity rather than social support. If you can handle the worst case, surely you can handle a better one, too.

Furthermore, I realized I wouldn't benefit from a “wertfrei” guide myself, for to support conviction, I would have to keep mental track of many things used to arrive at the final conclusion. Or indeed sterile consideration of facts does not ever birth action, until personal values are imposed to make verdict. I committed an error of overthinking before in the context of overcoming love. When I was going through yet another limerence case, I decided to write it down as I go through it, to narrate experience of resisting limerence for someone to be taught

in the future. I've ended up rationalizing about how I fell in love (since I was trying to explain it to the would-be reader) – but that made it difficult for me to overcome it. Deconstruction is not supposed to involve rationalization, in particular attention must be paid to Deconstruction pt.1 which may be confused for it, precisely the mistake I committed in that case, and which breaks the method. Deconstruction pt.1 is about finding facts that might influence the attitude, distort the perception of reality, and originate in the external to both person and love itself – its goal is to *debunk* them so they can't be fallen back to as a reason to keep love, to **judge them inadmissible** as a motive for love. They don't even need to be presently in effect – it is proofing against them surfacing in the future, against their interference with the decision to abort the pursuit of relationship. It is not speculation of why it may have been reasonable at the time to adopt the illusion of love in first place, but instead a shameless exercise of value-laden judgment dismissing any legitimacy of such grounds going forward. But it took some time for me then to discover and correct my mistake, which delayed resolution of that case. Conscious realization of how I corrected it reached me even later.

The following observation is then helpful to delineate correct application of method from the wrong. The meta behind methods of this guide can be expressed as a mental "**via negativa**", taken to mean achieving things "**by elimination**". This redefinition of "via negativa" is borrowed from the same book "Antifragile: Things That Gain From Disorder" by Nassim Nicholas Taleb already referenced in this guide prior, the relevant quote is below.

Quote

Almost anything around us of significance is hard to grasp linguistically – and in fact the more powerful, the more incomplete our linguistic grasp.

But if we cannot express what something is exactly, we can say something about what it is not – the indirect rather than the direct expression. The "apophatic" focuses on what cannot be said directly in words, from the Greek apophasis (saying no, or mentioning without mentioning). The method began as an avoidance of direct description, leading to a focus on negative description, what is called in Latin via negativa, the negative way, after theological traditions, particularly in the Eastern Orthodox Church. Via negativa does not try to express what God is – leave that to the primitive brand of contemporary thinkers and philosophasters with scientistic tendencies. It just lists what God is not and proceeds by the process of elimination.

(...)

> Now when it comes to knowledge, the same applies. The greatest – and most robust – contribution to knowledge consists in removing what we think is wrong – subtractive epistemology.
>
> Source: *Nassim Nicholas Taleb, "Antifragile: Things That Gain From Disorder"*.

A concept does not need a name to appear in practice, but where there was a previous confusion, there is a benefit to having some way of drawing the distinction. Putting spotlight on elimination concept in present work allows to render empirical knowledge more correctly to abstract (transmissible[14]) one. Methods were already incorporating this aspect empirically when they were invented (which was before I personally heard of "via negativa", in any definition), the aim of using term is for this aspect not to be lost in abstract description.

Let's scrutinize the beginning of Deconstruction. You recall, for example, that person received relentless praise from others. You realize that your attitude was, with likelihood, influenced by others opinion. However, this part does not really speak in their favor: it does not indicate your preference for them, but that of others. In likewise manner, you search and destroy other dubious justifications for feelings, by diverting them away from love and its object, and exposing their unreliability.

This procedure can be renamed then "Draining positivity away from love" – I have considered to officially name Deconstruction pt.1 this way, but couldn't decide on whether this wouldn't be too outré to some[15]. Although, in the end, that would be not a perfect name either – it is more about "not being a turkey" thing: external circumstances and other people shall not fool me into embracing love or this person. So one makes the person (or love towards them) no longer be considered the source of positive experience, so that positivity won't no longer keep one overlooking the downsides, nor provide a cope over misfortune (including one's

[14] The point about utility of 'abstract knowledge' vs 'empirical knowledge' can be found in the work of Arthur Schopenhauer's opus magnum "Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung", first volume, first book. Rough summary of relevant point is: empirical knowledge would be preferable every single time one has it, and can do work by oneself only, but tasks involving cooperation won't get far without abstract one, even if it never can be as accurate. The reason for this is that empirical knowledge is not transmissible – the content of communication can only constitute abstract knowledge.

[15] Actually, I rewrote the instructions of that point to not invite incorrect interpretations, which was easier than deciding on a new name.

struggle with limerence). The goal is not to rationalize for why would one seek escape in love – that would reinforce it – but instead to gain awareness of influences that confound rational judgment, and circumvent them. It does not involve guessing what is on the other person's mind and instead focuses on material facts, and disallows their use as justification for things remaining this way. Once you've found all the material facts and can't find anymore, the step is over, even if you found very little. In simpler cases, it will supply the initial impulse to get out of the relationship, but expanding on it and maintaining it beyond impulse would be the job of the second step anyway, therefore, it does not matter if there is not much gained in the beginning. An important thing is achieved regardless: the elimination of positivity attributed to love makes it possible to subsequently focus (in third step) on attacking the primary part of what sustains attachment – the illusion of uniqueness.

Notice the example above (about praise) implied a disposition: "*I do not want to be misled by opinion of others into appreciating something that is not a good fit for me*". One who doesn't have it, will struggle with that one. But things which suit others may not suit me. This doesn't imply others are necessary wrong in their preferences (although they could be, and indeed that happens sufficiently often), but that I recognize there are hard differences between what works, for distinct people. Like someone may have an allergy to some food, another passionately like it. I have observed before, numerous times, how others people, talking from their experience, give reference to some person or some group that doesn't work for me, and which I would not contact if following my own criteria, hence I learned to rationally discount such opinions, to color them "hazardous to accept". Emotionally, however, I do sometimes get influenced, which is why indeed Deconstruction method guides to conscious disentanglement of such influences, for they won't survive conscious scrutiny.

Thus if someone else's referrals failed you in the past, you can then root your position in that realization. Or one could argue that it is not a matter of taste, but matter of aims aligning, that decides the compatibility of two people, after all. This position indeed makes opinions and tastes totally irrelevant: *you are sailing in different directions and towards different destinations*. While at the time, the factuality of diverging destinations between you and that particular person may not be yet verified, it is safe to expel opinions of others from consideration – via negativa – for their irrelevancy to this evaluation.

Alternatively – if one elects so – the method can be backed by an universal principle: "*I do not want to be misled by others, at all. Group opinion is always*

irrelevant to my decisions.". Such principle if accepted, is accepted a priori. This principle I adopted really early in my life, which enabled me to discover methods to overcome love in the first place, even though methods can be used by people who don't adopt this conviction. If you wonder, how is it even possible to fall in love having this attitude, the answer is that it does not protect against (partly unconscious) fear of being side-lined, of "missing out" – which fear is provoked by possibility of not claiming for oneself what others find valuable. Kinda "must grab it just in case" – this hasty lust must be suspended then by reasoning, for claiming certain "prises" coveted by society may be a Pyrrhic victory. A prise with a "surprise", like a successful guy who is polite in public, but beats up his wife in private. People with a nice frontier may get nastier the closer you get to them, so don't get fooled by the social esteem they get.

Let's write down this observation: there are several ways to reach the necessary disposition, to enable some practice that works regardless of what exactly is used to justify it. The implications of this are left to reader's discretion.

All methods in this guide are built upon idea that is best to stop feeling unreciprocated love altogether than to bear it yet suppress its expression – hence, the resolution is to eliminate love thoroughly, and until that objective is reached, eliminate everything that supports love or might stir us towards behavior that reveals its presence. Deconstruction first eliminates one being content with limerence then works to provide the alternative to what was sought to be obtained from another person, Estrangement eliminates the possibility of going back to relationship and this deed itself destroys remaining feelings, Eclipsement denies the other person all attention, positive or negative, by draining it towards someone else. One is left to wonder, however, if some systemic approach could unify and explain boundaries of each method's utility.

An attempt at systematization can be made indeed. Each method has its area of applicability: when being in relationship with a specific person is a temptation only because effort is not needed to obtain it, one denies oneself such option through Estrangement. Such condition may arise when you have very important goal in life, in comparison to which, the option of relationship is insignificant, yet a temptation seemingly within reach – like a sweet treat in the shop. It thus prevents impulsive grabbing of that 'treat', as if one resisted compulsion to buy stuff, knowing full well it (compulsion) will soon expire – the conviction against relationship thus exists already. Deconstruction, on the other hand, is used on that where goal's worth seems comparable to other things you are pursuing, or became the sole pursuit. The attitude to overcome limerence is not present constantly

then: one experiences ambivalence. Deconstruction is thus structured so that the goal can be reevaluated and replaced with steel conviction to leave pursuit, and prevent other people from being able to mess with your reasoning. Eclipsement is used to throw clingy (flirtatious) persons into the abyss of indifference, to avoid falling into love-hate pattern. Thus, somewhat crudely, Deconstruction would be used when you are the party to chase the other person, Eclipsement when they chase you, and Estrangement when there is merely constant titillation that results from being in proximity of each other on a regular basis due to social roles. However, I never myself used a top-down approach to pick or justify a method. I actually pick methods solely by intuition: a gut feeling, for example, as to whether Estrangement would void my affection, or only hurt me.

I am of opinion that general guidelines for life do not hold – everything works within a certain context, and falls apart outside of it. However, some rare principles of discernment I derived appear to carry across all life situations – these all happen to involve elimination. First one is **principle of no blaming**, which produces **solution-oriented discernment**. It forbids to blame anyone, oneself or others, for anything, hard, at all times, without any exceptions, for an act of blaming directs one's attention away from situation, that is physically happening or already occurred, and keeping in mind that resource to apprehend it – attention – is limited. Thus a response to crisis situation, must be a response to bring about the desired change, to which end one might recruit people with skills to do so, and do what one is able to do through one's own effort, without emotional attachment to irrelevant aspects of the situation. One acknowledges that attaching blame, beside diverting attention and possibly instigating violence and escalation, diminishes effective competence: the capacity of one who is getting blame, to perform anything in which they have real ability – as if their skills and abilities are temporarily unlearned, in proportion to the weight of accusation. Or alternatively, if they are an assertive sort and choose “not to swallow it”, they repel this accusation and throw one of their own on us, both parties now distracted from the problem and angry at each other. Thus, realizing harm that blame would cause, one expels it – “via negativa” – from the list of relevant considerations. Basically: **deal with the situation you are in**, instead of finding a scapegoat, an excuse to forfeit any attempt to fix it.

The corollary of principle of no blaming is strict aversion to self-hate and negative thoughts about oneself. If caught thinking anything even remotely self-deprecating, one must immediately interrupt and invert such thoughts. On the other hand, not blaming others is not to be mistaken for refusal to pursue justice, nor does it imply forgiveness is somehow always a virtue – see next principle.

Another principle is **acceptance of responsibility to oneself**, or **integrity**. It is a stance that “I have willfully chosen so, and if it causes me irreversible consequences, even those I didn't envision, I am willing to live with them, or die because of it, and I won't hold others accountable for it, nor would I wish to go back, for to have such wishes is irrational and achieves no end”. At core of it is a negation of interventionism – I don't need anyone's help, let me face the consequences of my own actions. It accounts for fundamental unpredictability of life and impossibility of perfect knowledge – anything and everything, can later be shown to be wrong. Thus what matters is affirming one's will, everything else being irrelevant, and not to plead others for not stepping in, if this had negative consequences. I observe a different approach, if coercion was involved: if the “I have willfully chosen so” is not applicable, then neither does the rest. As for how to respond to interference, prevention of further interference shall be assigned priority over pursuit of vengeance (or restitution), if the latter is at all considered. For pursuit of vengeance may compromise other important goals one has. Forgiveness is only appropriate to consider if these are private matters and the harm is contained, otherwise forgiveness will obstruct interests of society and is thus contrary to justice. Even within private settlements, forgiveness must not be coerced, but left to the sole discretion of the plaintiff. There is also no real dichotomy about forgiveness and vengeance, it is merely a false one – the considerations about either can be suspended with ease. Those who say otherwise are not to be listened.

To defuse a language trap here I have to draw distinction between blame and justice. The shorter explanation is that blame is a deflection. You have an aim, and then you resign yourself from trying to attain it, because someone (even if it is you) is to blame. The longer explanation is as follows: concern over guilt or innocence is relevant to objective of justice, but it is not a relevant objective in crisis situation. Hence, for example, it is thought preferable to incapacitate and detain the criminal, rather than execute them without trial, interrogating a live person being easier than a dead one. Effective justice is concerned about fragility: you might be seeing only a fragment of what is happening. Thus, if feeling the need to blame, ask yourself which objective you are pursuing and how blame is relevant to that. Whereas with regards to vengeance, vindication – by society or by fate – is superior to vengeance, and if it is indeed vindication that one seeks after, vengeance might not be a satisfactory substitute for it. This is conditional on the attitude society has towards vengeance, though. I prefer to forgive friends, whereas my enemies tend to be taken care of by fate, as if a strange mark was placed on me that crossing my path may bring (or accelerate) bad fortune.

Furthermore, on my own observations, **healthy mind does more pre-conscious filtering than one in the state of anxiety**. I concluded, that if this natural mechanism fails and one is overwhelmed with input due to stressors, then filtering needs to be exercised consciously. Two corollaries follow. First is not to allow others to alter whatsoever what you decide is relevant and what is not. Hold fast to the way you draw distinctions and don't let others confuse you. It is especially important not to waste empathy[16] unreciprocally and not to yield to any demands to be more "empathetic". Save empathy, or rather sympathy, for those who are worth it. Second is, if the risk is small and confined only to the person making decision, contrived thoughts may be bypassed altogether. Some people overthink the situation to their detriment, where they would learn faster from experience. This is where one accepts – when stakes are low – that failing fast is better than any reasoning, and saves the effort of reason for where it is important: where risk is high or their mistakes can affect others.

One may speculate impaired filtering in anxiety happens for a good reason. However, since it is global and doesn't concern just the threat, it may obstruct solution rather than help find it. Nature didn't really expect us to be in anxiety mode for so long as it can happen in modern societies, and where instincts fail, conscious mind must attend to the task. Resources of conscious being limited, it becomes a necessity to aggressively cull what is not important to spare brainpower for important things.

In regards to logic getting in the way of solutions, there is something I stumbled upon in regards to creative activity, which is what I would call "**finding answers where you would never deliberately seek them out**". This way I've found, for example, that the best way to do chores is to not plan them: instead, lose all track of time and do them 'on a whim', when you feel so energetic that task's initiation costs no displeasure. 'Energy bar for spontaneity' fills when you are not planning anything, not blaming yourself for procrastinating anything. Whereas in regards to harder tasks that don't take just one day, if I suffer a creative block, I switch to an *unrelated* creative activity, and when I take a break (a walk towards some target is best), I suddenly obtain insights in regards to my primary, original creative activity. If activities are distantly related, like writing, gathering stuff from a different perspective helps my other project, and vice versa. What's more is that distance rather than relation seems to help. It parallels the technique of getting answers in a dream by letting questions slide aside, except this new

[16] Here the meaning of 'empathy' is as in vulgar usage: compassion, lack of prejudice, or action done out of affect. There is a higher form of empathy: a "mind-reading" capacity.

technique I'm currently developing allows to get progress on significantly more difficult tasks – projects that can span months or years. It is similar to yet distinct from tinkering: it is not necessarily that a secondary activity directly produces something useful for primary, but rather perspective shift (or shake) reveals way to proceed that was hitherto hidden from sight. It's like training discernment on a different activity in itself allows to move past roadblocks that old discernment produced. Additionally, since some activity is engaged, this engagement shields one from depression (but be careful not to work yourself into a burnout: don't demand of yourself an activity just because there should be activity, it is best to take rest – or even a nap – instead).

Thinking about it, it was always the same to me with relationships: most useful contacts were those I stumbled upon by pure chance. But never recommendations, and never by trying some assumption as to where they might be. Anyway, there are constraints for the technique above – it is implied you don't intend to give up on primary activity and don't have motivation crisis in regards to it, but merely struggle to implement working solutions at the time. Otherwise, switching won't get you anywhere; and if secondary activity becomes a time sink, it may lead to a burnout. It does, however, show that some life problems are solved not through logic – and especially not through reasoning from causality – but through serendipity: stumbling upon a solution and matching it to earlier encountered problem. It is also beneficial to take rest instead of working yourself into oblivion: trying to put more hours to make faster progress can produce the exact opposite result. Massive improvements can result from just trimming the amount of things you set out to do – including some things that would be in themselves worthy goals, were they not hindering achievement of other, *worthier* goals.

A broken discernment and its consequences

So far I talked about how things work – let's now see how they break.

The first example of broken discernment is popular perception of limerence. It diverged far from its intended simple meaning offered by Tennov – which was disambiguation of word “love”, a new single word to refer to the specific meaning of “love as what happens to one not what one does”, and to exclude other meanings packaged under umbrella of word “love”. The modern interpretations instead are stigma-laden, and very apt at generating confusion. The self-shaming is actually harmful, and the real world cases often don't begin as extreme – these may lead to early signs being overlooked or not attended to in serious manner (seeing oneself as afflicted with ‘fancy illness’), at the time when to deal with it

would still be easy. This can happen with consecutive limerences (these are likely to occur during period of social chaos): the end of former experience suspends an already formed interest towards a new person as well, but only temporarily. For when sharp drop occurs, one is temporarily desensitized, not capable of feeling love towards anyone. One then may think they lost interest in both, and if tension is formed with the second person during this period, conclude nothing needs to be done about it for it is already over, and also not recognize this as something that was in fact limerence (there was no obsession), until its later reemergence.

Upon this unattended "resolution" of something that seemed barely an infatuation at the time, they may silently drop into grief. This grief may begin without an acute phase and thus not be obvious, a bad mood not easily connected to what happened between oneself and another person. Per Tennov's claim, limerence rests on balance of hope and uncertainty. I rather restate it as limerence being predicated upon hope and necessity, whereas grief is necessity without hope, and that means two sides of equation to grief. The restatement doesn't change the premise of original – in case of limerence, uncertainty already implies necessity has not been secured, and there is some anxiety about it. Now, in the case of grief, necessity exists without an imaginable solution, it doesn't seem to be connected with a person, since it is not considered fulfillable in any way at all, and the corollary is the objective doesn't enter one's conscious mind much but the mood stays low. Removal or satisfaction of necessity ends grief for good, while a new hope out of somewhere may reawaken dormant limerence if necessity was not eliminated or addressed. I coined a phrase to succinctly capture this insight: "**grief is limerence sans hope**". I included it in one of "On motivation and indecision" advice bits, in case you missed it.

The "solutions" (in quotes for they can hardly work) abound on Internet don't make sense to me. There is a clear disconnect between them and my experience. I've discovered it is anxiety that predisposes one towards mind-wandering – imagination of schemes of getting or being with the person – rather than interaction with them. Contact is not necessary for hope – hope can become established if there is mere possibility of contact, and persist even if one restrains oneself from actually contacting the other person. What's more this anxiety is not related to attachment to the other person. Anxiety is connected to (perceived or real) external threat to one's life or quality of it (freedom, self-determination). If threat can't be eliminated, one may think of preserving oneself through or with the help of another – trying to overcome one's own mortality by imprinting another person's mind, or obtain their aid in a particular existential pursuit. So the aspects that promote development of limerence are actually external to the person and

the experience: they are life hardships – challenges that are significant and of high relevance. Anxiety also explains phenomenon of consecutive limerences: when threat persists and one is helpless to remove, they may end up looking for what can hide that inconvenient reality. Remaining in unrequited limerence under these circumstances serves as means to escapism, because one failed to convince another person to aid them. A reciprocal case can be this too – one didn't obtain the aid he sought but is unwilling to let go of the positive aspects of relationship, or limerence itself. Limerence within marriage – towards spouse rather than third-party – is thus possible, as well. And to those who think seeking arranged marriage would be necessary better, Leo Tolstoy's “Anna Karenina” has a counterexample that could have been fatal.

Now as for possibility of limerence that brewed unnoticed under veil of grief. The best (foolproof) response to an affect that seemingly passed would be to identify what was one's interest in that person, and supersede it. The minimal way would be to use first two steps of Deconstruction – if any reason to pursue a person exists somewhere in the mind, it will surface when one makes a conviction to never have relationship with that person, as a “but I wanted that…” objection. The later the problem is discovered, the harder it is generally to deal with. Popular ideas about limerence should therefore be thrown away – they can cost one, obscure things that require attention. A pragmatic, stigma-free approach is to be pursuing personal long-term goals, and to make judgment about prospective relationship: whether it will result in harm, be a dangerous distraction. If relationship is not to be, then how one does without it, how they attain their existential goal, or do they elect another. All these things I suggest pertain to self-determination, they don't care for social narrative but instead are concerned with reality sans such distortions. I do appreciate original Tennov's work, even if it is lacking in practicality, for it was opposed to stigma, the reverse of what other people are doing now with the term.

Not reading primary sources is broken discernment, ditto with scientism. The type of ignorance towards personal experience that is closely related to the latter I call being “**blackpilled by science**” (loosing incentive to act because one's motives are not “scientifically sound”, according to what passes for science in academic circles and journalist articles), or committing “**the Buridan's ass fallacy**” (inability or hesitation to act rationally because it requires making a choice that cannot be rationalized). While natural sciences like physics and chemistry created many things of practical utility, this can't be said about “social sciences” and anything that so far deals with human behavior. My bullshit meter flares up when I see pop science ideas like “attachment theory”, “triune brain”,

ideas about the role of dopamine, as well as all neuroscience stuff, just like it would towards alternative medicine. Science may at times produce valuable tools, but undertaken poorly, it can make those which are hazardous or superficial. The chapter “Lecturing birds on how to fly” from Taleb's book “Antifragile” is recommended reading, and there is also a line in his “Skin in the Game” book somewhere: “A free person does not need to win arguments – just win”, which is a direct counter to Buridan's ass fallacy.

A reader might want to know, what specifically I mean by scientism, as that term gets thrown around quite often without any clarification. I define scientism as a view that all knowledge is either in agreement with opinion of some expert on science, or to be ignored as if it were false. That is, any research paper (even not properly vetted or cross-examined) is presumed, according to scientism, to have more truth in it than any practice not explained or justified by research, and thus the former is preferred over the latter, no matter how new the former is, and no matter how battle-tested the latter is. Furthermore, scientism implies that nothing that was not subjected to research is regarded as having truth merit. Scientism is inherently rhetorical, it is aimed to discard any opinion in disagreement with authority and to force compliance and servility. Real science is instead a process aimed at systematization of knowledge, according to agreed-upon principles that can be reevaluated and changed in face of new empirical evidence, and is not concerned with political or social authority over those not engaging in it themselves. Yet, unfortunately, scientists in modern world are subject to enforcement by interested parties as well, to produce results favorable to those parties, which causes research in many areas to be compromised and no longer be actual science. Those same parties (such as policymakers and corporations) benefit from and encourage scientism. The sustaining force behind scientism is power and profit, the adoption by the duped folk is due to various reasons, such as presumptions about its utility, their personal negative experience with religion (another system of power and, in case, of organized religion, profit), result of shaming, etc. I will touch this subject (in particular, adoption of scientism by those who hold no position of power) yet again in “Self-determination and morality” section of this essay.

Short version of distinction is: **science is descriptive, admits of errors and is committed to correcting them, scientism is prescriptive and authoritarian**. In actual science, new ideas do not immediately become consensus, in scientism – politics, journalism, all that pushes narratives about “science” etc. – they can and do become dogma. Scientism does harm besides interventionism from those who don't bear consequences, as well as unsolicited interventionism – it causes people

to doubt themselves, and doubt can be deadly. To gain some ground outside of one's personal experience, one can look to the ideas (or practices) that survived the test of time, without making fools of their followers or causing their extinction. Taleb calls this “Lindy effect” and goes into detail on it in another book – “Skin in The Game: Hidden Asymmetries in Daily Life”. Proper heuristic is actually hard to get right, for ideas must be tested for survival not just hang around otherwise, and I didn't use it hitherto in robust enough or conscious manner, I just have disdain towards fashion and fad.

A contrast between useful and harmful advice coming from the side of science can be observed in “The Egoscue Method – Health Through Motion” by Pete Egoscue and Roger Gittines, chapter “The Two R's – Relevance and Responsibility”, section “A presidential pain” (the last section of that chapter). The book asserts that processes deleterious to bone cartilage result from the workload of weight-bearing tasks or movement activities being distributed onto wrong body parts, because muscles appropriate for supporting these activities are undertrained in people with sedentary lifestyle. Instead of replacing one's joints with some artificial design, one can avert these processes by training those underdeveloped muscles that should actually support daily activities. The load now being distributed correctly, the processes that rebuild the cartilage are no longer outpaced by processes that delete it. So the author tries to convince – but unfortunately unsuccessfully – Gerald R. Ford that after he gone had through the necessary training and got rid of pain that he has no reason to go with knee replacement surgery. All he needed was to keep exercising, as he already observed improvement: the pain was gone. Unfortunately, bad science turned out to be more convincing. Who exactly insisted on surgery is not given in the book, but former US president believed that person instead. I do have reservation about this book using “pleasure principle” in argumentation – to hell with that crap – but otherwise book's idea of our bodies being designed by Nature for motion, as well as message *against* replacing with some artificial, engineered design that which can be restored to natural function, are awesome.

For the next case study, **let's see how broken discernment can result in misdirection.**

This kind of broken discernment is exemplified in dwelling on childhood trauma as a root cause of one's setbacks, which correlates with envy towards ‘successful’ people or, worse yet, violence towards one's parents. It must be acknowledged that medical model of psychiatry is also wrong, so my argument should not be misinterpreted as defending parents' actions. Rather, assigning blame can (and

often will) result in spiral into anger or depression, hindering the search for any improvements of one's life. So it is necessary to interrogate this thought process to see where the aim this. The underpinning motivation that leads to such adoption may be desire for vindication, or a scapegoat for struggles in one's life that one gave up on overcoming, or even both. As I mentioned before, revenge is poor substitute for vindication – conditional on our times ascribing negative rather than positive value to personally exacting revenge. So if one doesn't get society to accept their pain (the most likely outcome), this pursuit only reinforces suffering, and when one is institutionalized, trying to pursue recognition of harm puts one at risk of being subject to yet more.

For genuine grievances, my recommendation is to compartmentalize: put one's parents mentally in a loser or a psychopath box and leave them there. Don't fight parents in real life, do your best to avoid fights and disengage them if possible. Another important realization, is that especially when many factors are at play, **we can't be certain about causality.** Solution-oriented approach begins with getting distance from those who can do harm – if institutionalized, the priority is getting out. Don't seek to change others' actions by making them understand – get to safety, instead. For those not at risk, keep in mind that solutions to your specific situation may not be immediately discoverable but nonetheless won't be discovered through searching the past. It is the present that needs to be changed anyhow – you must brace yourself for answers to arrive by serendipity, meanwhile improve whatever conditions that you can. To combat useless fantasies about a time machine, recall any upsides you got from adversity, such as: dispositions as defiance, survivalist mentality, and rejection of groupthink – and thus observe, that if you were to part with downsides you would also have to part with all the insight that was acquired through negative epistemology. Won at high price though they were, even minor upsides add up: one might refuse to indulge alcohol because he saw what alcoholism did to one of his parents, and hard-avoid all other substances that might cause dependence as well, and thus also resist coercion by medical authority.

When overwhelmed with resentment, principle of no blaming can serve as emergency brake and block progression alongside wrong path. However, if one experiences flashbacks, they are replaying past scenarios involuntarily, which is not caused by broken discernment, but by something else. These flashbacks are rehearsals. Mind is preparing to survive, trying to solve past challenges it failed to solve because expecting them to be repeated in the future. To make it stop, the challenges need to be either solved, or revealed as not relevant to survival. The first would be about training to stand one's ground in conversation, which

can be achieved in two quite distinct ways. The ‘aggressive’ tactic is to shame the adversary back or intimidate them. This is achieved by outright foregoing debate and launching character assassination on them, using their own past and their own shortcomings to tear them apart, so in this case not much “standing the ground” as it is “offense is best defense”. The ‘professional’ tactic (one usable in corporate environment) requires a leverage – in the form of certain responsibility they owe and can be coerced into by society, or otherwise an obligation they imposed on themselves and which they own up to that nonetheless conflicts with their actions and can be shown to them to so conflict. The extent of my negotiation skills unfortunately ends here, but another way to combat flashbacks may be available depending on what else one has been through. If it happens one survived some really tough predicament in adulthood without help of others, one can use that as ultimate card to tell their mind those past quarrels proved to be de facto irrelevant to their survival.

A note, however, that only the person themselves has any right to say “I survived” (to themselves), other people don't have any moral right to say “You survived” to the one who went through hell and back; plus the advice mentioned (about having survived more than once, and the last time in more dire conditions than hitherto) is quite specific, only a fraction of survivors can actually utilize it, and to be within that fraction is not exactly a blessing. Flashbacks can still resurface in context where corresponding challenge from the past appears to be relevant – I couldn't evict them all using just mental tricks, had also to change my views substantially: to stop trying to help arrogant people out of the way of harming themselves and others, and instead allow their stupidity and recklessness to cause death to themselves or to people they care about. Survivor's ignorance towards others' pain, I call it, also “accepting one's role of avenging daemon – of a living dialectic of culling” (aka natural consequence of learning from adversity and of becoming better at winning in real life as opposed to in debates).

Returning to concept of causality. Even within the part of universe that is bound by principle of sufficient reason, the actual reason is not necessary found, and may be very different from what we imagine it to be. Or the abstract ideas don't lead to any working solutions, but **solutions and causes are found far apart from each other**, that is solutions are arrived at through tinkering and serendipity rather than synthesized from previous conceptions.

One company I worked briefly in was plagued by bad ideas: stopwatching, expecting workers to turn up with the solutions to increase their own productivity (rather than present problems affecting their work that need collective solution).

It was a small software company dreaming of beating its debt and even growing by going the way of “lean” – inspired as it was by success of Toyota – but always fell into trap in Taylorism. While working at that company, I pondered the question if the most significant losses are actually those that can't be given a quantity estimate, but result from stalls: vendor software crashes or interpersonal, organizational factors. A common error was to assign someone to a task beyond their competence, and expect them to report when they have ideas and suggestions – since often they could conceive of none, they were sitting on the task not being able to make progress, and never showed up. Overall, in regards to software development, I concluded that there are “processes that create errors” – promote fragility – which escape metrics but are easy to spot to engineer thinking in terms of “what is prone to break in the future” instead of cost savings. A collective way of addressing this was needed, but it was not evident even to me as to how this can be achieved.

Eventually, I ditched that company for another, and there the problem was at least partially addressed. That other company held “short daily meetings” within each unit (team) – these were done online. They were used to check on progress, to discuss what one is doing, to spot if there are any problems that hinder task completion, and leaned towards horizontal rather than hierarchical approach. The stalls were caught early, those who struggled with something could receive advice or assistance from people with less load, and there was enough opportunity to figure things out without assistance when one could do so in a day. To minimize interference, interrupting people during day – bare urgent issues – was discouraged, all non-urgent issues were to be brought up the next working day if still relevant. In regards to software breakage, this company used mostly modern open-source software for development, whereas the former company was dependent on a private and rather obnoxious vendor, for all projects that brought most revenue to the former company were powered by really ancient software stack. Therefore the new company could replace stuff the former couldn't – was *less fragile*.

Broken discernment can arise from **being pressured to look into concerns not personally relevant**. In regards to “Anna Karenina” novel, for example, the pressure not to judge (negatively) the titular character would result in broken discernment. To feel contempt towards that character is healthy and natural, it represents intact moral compass, and enables critical analysis of her thought processes that lead to her demise, her demise being definitely her own doing – and solely so. Contempt doesn't get in the way of such analysis, the way that shame for being judgmental would. **There is moral value to contempt**, when it results

from someone else acting in the way observer sees as morally depraved or stupid because it hurts the actor – contempt arises from one's instinctive discernment that also inclines one against doing those same things.

As I said in “An existential love?” essay, I view “Anna Karenina” as a novel about who chooses life, and who chooses death, when confronted by life's unpredictable and adversarial nature. As a lesson of morality, rather than invitation to commiserate with a fictional character's plight. This may seem disrespectful of Leo Tolstoy's actual intentions with the novel (to present religion as a solution to anomie brought about by industrialization – a train being a metaphor thus for foreign technology running over destinies of those who couldn't find moral compass in new social reality), yet I prefer to learn from people's mistakes, and thus **I do insist on being allowed to judge – to not divert attention from things relevant to survival**. Anna Karenina's final mistake is repurposing reason as a mere instrument to end suffering. But life is not to be seen in terms of pleasure and pain dichotomy: the evolutionary purpose of reason is to provide us with better heuristic of survival than pleasure or pain, which are also survival heuristics (thus are means not goals) but not as sophisticated and refined as that of reason. The true first goals are self-preservation and excellence, not happiness, nor pain avoidance. This position is not the same as “life entails suffering”, for many of such people (including myself) choose life, or won't actually commit to pursuing death – but Anna made reason slave to a particular problem.

On the other hand, contempt that is married to action can lead to excessive violence. For example, if one knocks an adversary down in self-defense, and when adversary is already incapacitated, continues to kick them out of contempt, they will exceed the boundaries of self-defense that way. One shall therefore watch out how far contempt takes them. Forbidding contempt in general does more harm than good, as contempt is more easily controlled than anger. I simply don't allow myself to act violently out of contempt, but I don't neglect its value otherwise. My default way to express contempt is through avoidance and withdrawal of empathy, other options need to be evaluated first with a cool head, given time before committing to them.

But there is more to contempt as that which makes action possible: **making a distinction**. This entails seeing some course of action as distinguishing oneself (setting oneself apart) from the inferior crowd, which leads to following that course of action. This is, importantly, not superiority by birth right, but necessarily through accomplishment. Distinction actually goes beyond contempt or spite so it is not just about initiating action, it is about staying the course as well. The

other side of coin is inevitable stop if you lose belief that such things set you part, which stop cannot be recovered by any attempts to gain so-called “motivation”. Mechanical solutions as to how overcome “akrateia” are useless, if this loss has occurred – either you can find a way to draw the distinction again, or you can not. Also, believing that some birth right confers one superiority will also hinder doing in general, as it makes a temptation to fall back on in the face of failure to ascend to some aspiration through accomplishment.

Slowed discernment is another variation of the topic, when before approaching solution to a relevant problem, one investigates irrelevant concerns. Popular classifications of love dating back to Ancient Greece are notable example of being both an obstacle to solving the problem of love towards person who is not worthy of it (slowed discernment) as well as promoting uninvited interventionism, misogyny, and other problematic ideas and behaviors (discernment that is outright broken). Consider that if another person doesn't want any favors or doesn't give anything back or engages in dishonorable behavior, that alone is relevant and justification enough to disengage them, probably go a few steps beyond to ensure they can't take advantage of you. No kind of love is suitable to remain in this scenario – to distinguish between them is not necessary.

Shedding irrelevant concerns can be condensed into a razor-like formula: **the goal is solution-oriented discernment, the method is via negativa, what is expelled is ignoratio elenchi**. Ignoratio elenchi is a proposition or argument that does not address the originally raised issue, it may be inspired by original issue but is an argument towards some other goal. In debate, ignoratio elenchi can result in a derail. It affects internal decision-making the same way. Blame is universal ignoratio elenchi. Classification of love is a definite ignoratio elenchi when the issue at hand is to cease interaction with a certain person. What's more, it is ignoratio elenchi in many other cases. Even for an ethical position, the relevant distinction would be between a person of duty and those who are only around while it's fun, as these conduct their social affairs differently. One needs not run from love towards the former, but definitely would want to avoid entanglement with the latter.

When facing criticism over the way one judges things, it is important to stay vigilant and not yield to pressure. If one's critic resorts to shaming tactics, these are usually not accompanied by any reasoning, for one who is interested in reasoned debate does not resort to such tactics, those who do have a different goal in mind. They must be then dismissed – stay by what works in reality rather than what pleases someone else. Unless a reasoned criticism is offered, in which

case one might actually want to heed it. Those who have caused harm should be dismissed in entirety – it is a safety consideration, where overlooking a potentially good argument is acceptable in order to not let any bullshit slide together with it. People with ill manners tend to congregate among their ilk, so one shall not stay in that community but find a better one instead. Indeed different communities may have opposite values, for example, in regards to acceptability of ghosting. And no, there is no algorithm to finding a good community – you keep trying, and you find one when you find one.

One, therefore, must recognize danger of blurring at all times, not just when solving a particular problem. Those who confuse your discernment don't have your interests at heart. Examples of blurring are idea of mandatory forgiveness, stigmatization of limerence, and destigmatization of those dependent on drugs. On the latter, it must be recognized that **the plight of drug addicts is not general public concern** – general public does benefit both from criminalization of drugs that can trigger dependency and from stigmatization of drug users, whether those abuse it or take if for some 'medical concern'. For whatever crowd one mingles among, one usually becomes like them – addicts choose addicts, and landlords prefer tenants who do not even smoke nor drink alcohol, for a purely practical reason even if they don't engage with them much otherwise. **Repulsion has protective value**, and those who got addicted crossed that line forcibly many times, consciously gone against Nature, suppressed natural repulsion towards alcohol or drugs more than once.

The dreaded opioid crisis in US didn't arise naturally. It resulted from agenda of pharmacies who bribed scientists to convince the general public that those drugs are acceptable for medical purposes – breaking discernment for many because it was profitable for few. It is not taxpayer's job to fix it. People may have other struggles they need their undivided attention to overcome. It's when they aspire to political or other sort of power, that they become responsible for solving things, or else they must be removed from those positions. If authority is making such demands on society as to be more sympathetic towards drug users, it is 1) hiding its own incompetence through deflection 2) malicious and corrupt.

One's drug aversion shouldn't stop at opioids – it is to be extended to all substances that can cause dependence. One will do wise by staying away from those who would take even a single benzodiazepine pill because "doctor prescribed them", or those who smoke weed, as they would from those addicted to fentanyl. No distinction needs to be made between those failures – some things are just not tried, period, and people who do them are bad company to keep. Complacency and

servility are no lesser ills. Anti-drug laws and scaremongering about consequences of their use may not help those already on them, but they can be sufficient incentive for people to stay clear of them, and for that they are valuable. Since in regards to these it is best not to start in first place, prevention should be given a priority: it is a fallacy to help people recover from drugs yet have more people start doing them, than have less people start them to begin with. Social awareness and prevention of starting drugs can be practically achieved through the concept of “negative role model”.

Negative role model is a concept based on subtractive epistemology: what caused one's ruin can be more reliably assessed than what caused their success. There are loud examples of those of “notoriety” who harmed themselves and therefore serve a practical example what others shall refrain from doing. One such example is Jordan Peterson: first consenting to use anti-anxiety drugs prescribed by a doctor, then, once already addicted, insisting on quitting them cold turkey, as if at that point bravery signaling was any relevant. A case for another razor of discernment – it is more important to **stay clear of certain things** in life than it is to clear your apartment, or than to try to push some political agenda and suppress criticism by disguising it as a working self-help advice.

Taking care not to cope with our own shortcomings by gloating over another person's demise, we may still take cue as to how one might end in that situation – what kind of discernment makes one vulnerable towards coercion or persuasion (trait of “agreeableness”), and generates other errors. The case of Peterson then illustrates that doing one's own research instead of putting trust in others is indispensable. Actions that resulted in his ruin were consistent with what he finds relevant – status and big ego – and what he finds not: practical reason that ignores hierarchical concerns, and focuses on those facts which correspond to tail risk and fragility. In privacy of doctor-patient relationship status didn't matter of course, for he didn't see that relationship as challenging it, and one can rationalize around it anyway.

The focus in negative role model, however, is on actions to avoid – not on making yourself feel better so you can ignore your own lack of attainment. If the concept gets in the way, a direct approach shall be tried: just remember what brings misery, and take care to avoid it. If, at any point in your life you contemplate receiving medical intervention, consider its tail risk. Ignore the supposed rarity of side effects – ask yourself how you are gonna deal with them, if they happen to you. Assume the worst case, they happened and you need to get over it. Can you? How often they happen statistically to general population doesn't matter: if

you dread them happening to you and cannot conceive of how you can recover from that, there you have your answer. An element of coercion is implicit in any conversation, thus even doctors concerned in earnest about giving their client agency may not effectively enable the full exercise of it. I had my father die after a surgery, because the bleeding started after he was no longer on emergency watch but was moved to a regular patient room – I did get "assurance" then that surgery "concluded ok", but it turned out the routine post-surgery emergency watch is too short to make such assertions. A doctor is just one link in the chain where all people gamble on your life, which chain includes nurses and the rest of personnel, the pharmacy companies, the fake scientists and their improperly blinded trials, etc. Hence even suppose no-bullshit doctors existed, trust in a doctor still blinds you to many variables which are relevant.

Next subject concerns hope, as in **distinguishing between fool's hope and one's resolve in the face of uncertainty**. The first one is passively expecting external circumstances to change for the better, the latter is a decision to proceed doing that which may capitalize on a future opportunity. This is where one's possible demise can be brought by events outside of one's control and these cannot be mitigated, but whether it would happen is uncertain, and one might benefit from a positive Black Swan which is completion of the task where either demise does not happen at all, or is not realized before task's completion. Is drawing this distinction meritable? Fate *seems* to smile enough even to fools, whereas those who done all they could not always succeed. But replace the former attitude with the latter, and nothing is lost, yet some may be gained, if one indeed seizes on that opportunity one could otherwise miss. Going the other way may result in missed opportunities, and if it does, those may mean the difference between life and death. Therefore **one should avoid passive hope, though it is as important not to give in to haste nor develop excessive trust in one's own strength**. Don't reach out for each missable opportunity – instead, don't rule out opportunities may arise for which you may prepare in advance, and which require said preparation. For the good ones usually do, whereas those which don't frequently serve interests of others: consider that in unrequited limerence, hoping for the other person to change attitude is not a good idea, and if it even changes might rather indicate they developed a hidden agenda that is behind fake benevolence.

The "I should have done" fallacy is what I will dig into last. The list of things that constitute broken discernment can go on and on, so once done with this point I will be wrapping up.

This kind of fallacy pertains to *describing to others* either how one could have acted, instead of how they really acted; or how they plan to act in future, as if one had certitude that this is indeed a wise course of action, rather than hypothesis yet to be tested. It shall be noted, then, that **action not taken has no epistemic value**, which is a corollary of timeless Buddhist wisdom: “To know and not to do is not yet to know”. One may have notion that what they actually did was wrong, but they don't have realistic notion of whether an alternate course of action would be right, until another opportunity presents itself, that action is taken AND it turns out to be a correct one. As such, they ought to keep it to themselves.

The Buddhist wisdom here matters because if one did not follow some course of action, there might have been reservations – conscious or otherwise – about it, and one may not have been able to realistically execute it, at least without acquiring additional information or skills. We are all “wise” in retrospect – except this is an illusion fostered by forgetting or overlooking details of the situation. Thus our imaginary solutions we did not take in reality may be unhelpful to others when they land in that situation, for they'll recognize the relevant concerns that our advised solution doesn't address; we ourselves can land into a different predicament by going contrarian path to the one we went before. Therefore, to adopt and test one's own hypotheses is fine, and indeed necessary, but one shall refrain from passing them around while they are still untested. That is, keep your “I should have…” to yourself. If otherwise they get mentioned in context they can be taken as an advice, one shall indicate them as having not being evaluated for veracity yet, no assurances made about what is achieved. I would also consider caution about relaying advice about what was tested in practice merely once, as opposed to repeatedly tested. For this purpose, common sense, popular opinion, and even those things that appear to have exhibited Lindy effect, until personally tested, shall be regarded as hypotheses.

A specific instance of the fallacy is envisioning oneself to go back and play some role, or adhere to some archetype, to put distance between themselves and another person they got entangled with. This approach, constituting a contingency plan in effect, can only succeed for simple interactions – those where the only goal is to convey one's disinterest or prevent oneself from initiating a conversation (and quickly wrap it up if the other person does). But it is not a good idea to imitate a phantom, or specifically what one is not, to fake things one has not yet attained direct understanding, when trying to, for example, support somebody in distress but not become overly involved. A man who has never been to the sea before will not succeed in trying to prevent a shipwreck by role-playing a maritime pilot. Dilemmas involving interaction between two or more people may be just as

difficult. Practical knowledge is what is needed to navigate complex interpersonal interactions, not hollow imitations. Lacking direct experience, one may only find valid guidance in *concrete* examples of specific act by a well-known real-life person (rather than a hero in some tale) that proved wise in similar circumstances – and then *only* if it is simple enough to reproduce without training. This bit about whether training is required to repeat the fit is not to be overlooked.

In fact, I have concluded that **certain ideas** (such as archetypes, hero's journey, individuation, whatever) **obscure what is relevant**. Such relevant things as, for example, practical wisdom in regards to interpersonal relationships, actually caring for companions instead of using them as means to resolving Animus/Anima problems. Indeed I regard Jungian archetypes as traps recurring across generations, rather than valid guidance, which traps every individual needs to recognize as such, and develop instead practical wisdom of which these are impostors. The collective unconsciousness is to be considered a repository of delusions, a treacherous advisor who does not act in interest of neither oneself not community, a host of appearances and *mirages*.

How does this mesh with the point made earlier about distinction as the driver of long-term pursuits? Don't build distinction on ephemeral grounds. Allow your convictions to be checked by reality, don't adopt those that can be used to always reframe your failures. You are not making progress towards ‘individuation’ when you screw up interpersonal relationships – you just screw up.

Speaking of practical wisdom, next topic is dedicated to elucidating matters around morality, and self-determination.

Self-determination and morality (eight-part treatise)

This is the penultimate subject within the guide that could have been a standalone work in its own right, were it not for requirement for reader to be familiar with the already covered subjects of limerence and akrateia. Indeed it took several times more to write it than all the preceding text and will take reader many stops to get through. Still, there was a reason (singular) for me to embed it in present guide: this treatise is insurance in case that opus magnum (Theory of Action) doesn't get completed. Correspondingly, a standalone version of this treatise does not have to exist – because it and the enveloping essay will, hopefully, be superseded by ToA.

These are the parts that it is composed of (the titles should give you a rough indication what you are getting into):

I. Rejecting fatalism, and why social norms and morality are not the same thing 100
II. How moral convictions get adopted, tested and their relation to our agency 142
III. The metaphysical model: knowing oneself and knowing others 164
IV. Charting one's destiny through overcoming adversity 183
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I. Rejecting fatalism, and why social norms and morality are not the same thing

In this rather elaborate work of practical (not academic) philosophy, I will be challenging all conventional ideas about morality, epistemology, authority, "having nothing to hide", and even utility of science versus metaphysics. This is necessary to counter the decadence of modern society, namely the fatalism – by which word I will refer here to specifically the self-defeating attitude of "the scientists (and AI) have figured out it all, no place for effective individual agency is left" – and the other calamity, atomicity. Also, I will spare neither religion nor science its harsh treatment: I don't enlist one to attack the other – I tear into both of them.

Yes, science itself – not only scientism – can do harm: by diverting attention from practical matters to the plethora of facts not helpful in resolution of our life problems. Scientism further undermines our dignity, dismissing our relevant concerns to which we want direct solutions, and placing focus on our "status" in relation to some authority that claims pretense to knowledge. Yet the effectiveness with which we attend to daily concerns, rests on our ability to recognize which is relevant, correctly so, and as fast as possible. To distinguish relevant concerns from irrelevant, is that which makes all the difference between timely and appropriate action, versus everything else. Hence there can be relevant facts, but also irrelevant facts; relevant practices, and irrelevant practices. Valuable, relevant practices often don't derive themselves from any confirmed truth or anything which is considered true as per consensus – their value is established by these practices having worked consistently in the past and thus expected to continue to work in the future. Having better chance of doing so, than anything emerged as pure theory and not yet tested in reality.

In the sea of facts, the most relevant are ones about fragility: damage that will happen, things that will break, risks that are imprudent to take. Other facts matter less, or not at all. The aim that determines pursuit, comes from realm of values, not facts: what is there to be instead of what there is. Pursuit of aim is supported by morale – low morale is detrimental to pursuit, high morale is beneficial. In case of the need to overcome limerence, the way to maintain morale is unconditional self-respect, while the need to overcome limerence follows from recognition that limerence does make one fragile, *plus* the value judgment that fragility must necessary be erased. That the latter is a value judgment can be proven by existence of people who'd preach the opposite, asinine opinion about the "virtuousness" of a person who is vulnerable. The instruction of Theory of Action is to discard such asinine opinions, per Taleb's words of wisdom: "a free person doesn't have to win arguments – just win". Self-blame is not helpful, but exactly harmful: it lowers morale, divides attention, takes away resources the reason needs to assess the situation and develop the response to it. The sole positive use of shame and guilt, is when one must desist from all action, absolved of right to participate. At all other times, they are detrimental, even severely so, and if one acts nonetheless when under them, he acts recklessly, for the only way to act under them is to act out a compulsion.

Hence what matters is not what is true, but what is relevant. The authority that obnoxiously scolds us for not acknowledging the 'truth' yet never tends to our relevant concerns, is a bad authority. I thus have no need to distinguish between "weak" scientism and "strong" scientism, because science is not congruent with beliefs that enable one to act effectively and support morale. Let's call them prudent beliefs, whereas beliefs that lead to ruin will be imprudent beliefs. Relevance, morale, avoiding being a sucker – this is what decides outcomes in real-life, not what science holds as true. Science is a librarian, a cataloguer: the technology does, whereas the science documents and tries to put up the coherent explanation behind all things discovered to work. Occasionally, new working designs come out of science, but mostly progress is the work of technologists not scientists, and a lot of non-natural inventions are actually discovered to have repercussions later: e.g. plastic. Technological progress (and exploitation of the unfortunate, that is, slave labor[17]) is what earns enough money for science to happen, not the other way around. **Science is as its best when it points out**

[17] Slave labor is all but gone from modern world – it has taken on more covert forms: "illegal" immigrants working for cheap pay in abysmal conditions, trade with countries that don't care about human rights and thus can produce cheaply, etc. We never truly moved to post-colonialism but rather those in power learned how to sweep evidence of exploitation under the rug and

fragility, but this also means it is far more effective at ascertaining negative knowledge (debunking, disproving) than a positive one.

Focusing on facts that don't enable resolution of the problem – and worse yet, hurt morale – is imprudent. Winning arguments may yet confer defeat in real life: **what is relevant in debate is different from what is relevant in real life**. Debate is about authority, real life is about survival and elimination of the dumb (the unfit). He who wins popular fame in discussion, of course, gets emboldened by such victory. But if he gets entrenched in imprudent beliefs, this hastens his demise. The only reason this is not observed more casually is that most debates revolve around topics purely theoretical – at least for the participants engaged – where it doesn't matter who wins, and who ends up believing what. Debates in mundane society being (or devolving into) confrontation of egos, it is important in life to never get deceived by any authority – not to entrust your life to those who'll play dice with it recklessly.

There is no reason to resign one's hope yet. The rich psychopaths like to maintain illusion that they control history, yet much things happen outside of their control, and definitely not according to their expectations. Neither US nor Russian intelligence anticipated how Russian invasion of Ukraine would pan out – they seriously thought this 'little' campaign will be over in three days or a week. As Taleb established, predictions rarely work. We shall thus talk of morale more, and of predictions less. Except for one thing: it is possible to *shape* behavior to make it more predictable, and thus it is practical to consider how to defend oneself against it. Shaping behavior is about technology, not science, so it is a real thing and works. You find the thing that works – via bruteforce approach – then you do it over and over again. Propaganda is also a technology, not science, and thus about things that work. If a government has a large budget to throw into propaganda, they are bound to find what makes the public tick. A lot of money will be wasted on approaches that failed fast, but with bottomless budget, discovery of working propaganda techniques is guaranteed.

False counters to fatalism are to be declined, though. The "I have nothing to hide" statement, is cope. Those who say it are fragile and they know it. The answer to "I am harmless (or uninteresting) so who would want to harm me?" is **"you can be targeted because you cannot fight back"**. If you can be exploited, it is advantageous for government to target you, even if you meant no harm (think

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discredit those who would unearth it, or otherwise turn them into "controlled opposition" (an example of which is woke movement).

MKULTRA). Your health history can be used against you – not just mental health history, but all chronic conditions or other things that make you fragile. If you are an activist, caring for people less fortunate than you, or even a peer participating in a self-help group, there is a reason for government to take interest in you.

The government can coerce drug addicts, recovering and non-recovering alcoholics, and their influencers to take part in its shady activities. They make complacent "witnesses" for prosecution, and can help frame some naive "I have nothing to hide" idiot believing that fair trial will redeem him. To become target for a stealth operation is enough for intelligence to consider you a liability, a potential trouble-maker, as intelligence justifies their actions in an utilitarian sense: "better safe than sorry", "you befriended the wrong person", "in public interest". And the utilitarian justification done by institutions operating on classified information is unfalsifiable because it rests on evidence not available to general public, whose interests it is said to "protect". To become target, is enough to be a person at whom most links in some movement connect – a piece of chain which, if cut, breaks the whole chain. It is not necessary to kill you, if character assassination will do, or if you can be driven to suicide otherwise. Being well-connected does not prevent you from being targeted: the chilling effect is stronger when a relatable person is torn down, rather than an outcast. You are actually more interesting target that way, provided they find how you are vulnerable.

Privacy is dignity: intelligence employees are people, they do have personal motives and can act upon them. Conveniently for them, it is easier to extract false confession with torture than it is to conduct proper interrogation to uncover truth they don't already know. And when there is one employee advancing their career by employing immoral techniques, others don't want to stay behind even if they entered service as idealists. Unless they are hardcore idealists (like Edward Snowden), they will either wash out, or start doing what more successful – because depraved – colleagues do. Nobody wants to be left behind, or fail to provide for their family – unless their personal moral code assigns greater importance to the virtue of justice.

Your descendants may aspire to become political or other powerful figures – your misfortune can be used for slander against them. No one is safe against having account of their compromise – is is human nature to disclose in conversations, to try out things, to err. This nature never anticipated indefinite and detailed retention of the past – our minds don't retain all past events but only those relevant to ourselves, and only relevant things about events not the full pixel-accurate account of events. You are not even going to remember some things that someone

else will dig out of verbatim account, and will use to take you down. And while it may be verbatim account of something that happened, it won't, however, retain the bigger context that would affix real relevance and thus challenge what the accuser holds as personally relevant. Good luck then, having a non-corrupt judge that will allow you to mention that context, and a lawyer who knows how to present it in court setting. And if you are judged by the mob (e.g. cancel culture), you won't have that opportunity even in theory, because the mob doesn't adhere to legal principles that stood the test of time.

Where there are extreme exceptions, there are effectively no laws. Everything pertaining to anti-terrorism is at odds with Western legal tradition. National Security Exception is an unreasonable carte blanche that waves away any rights of defendant. A convenient excuse, that cannot be challenged yet precisely is that, a convenient excuse backed by authority which authority itself rests on physical force. The anti-terrorist laws are not meant for your protection in actuality – it is government protecting their power over you, and seeking ever more. There are no limits to their hunger for power, and they always attain more except when public manages to push back against it, and they will spin every opportunity when public feels the need to ask for protection, in order to prevent that pushback. It will frame opposition leaders as “conspiracy theorists”, capitalize on the necessity of public to feel safe, all so the public doesn't contest the power grab. The difference between “democracy” and “dictatorship” is in the amount of theatrics to mask the real nature of authority, which is as it was portrayed in “Nineteen Eighty-Four” by George Orwell. **It is not a regime type that defines how much freedom a citizen has, but how much society has successfully pushed back against the government** – forced it to forfeit its attempts to usurp more power. Power dynamics in general are about daring and contest, both the coming to power and growing of it – whether by individuals, by collective or by abstract entities such as state, intelligence agencies, etc. – are decided by having dared to claim more power without having being subsequently forced to forfeit it. When claim for more power is not contested, the winner is the claimant. Thus whenever society fails to pushback successfully, or whenever a prominent part of society is ok with the changes, the power of government grows and the freedom of society shrinks.

I would dare to assert that in regards to state-vs-society specifically, the arrow goes in only one direction – power only ever grows and freedom only ever shrinks: if the power grab by the government wasn't contested from the very beginning, there is never an opportunity to revert it later. The “democracies” that feel to you freer than “dictatorships” are only that way because the public secured enough freedom during original regime transformation that created said “democracies” –

unless another revolution happens, your descendants will have less freedom just like your ancestors had more.

At any rate, believing that innocence is somehow a shield from being treated unfairly and with prejudice, is believing a delusion. The practically relevant question then is how to live without this delusion, and **maintain one's morale in modern world**.

Let's start with via negativa approach: **eliminate things that ruin morale**. There is a culture of lifehackers, of people embracing finding personal exploits, who nonetheless try to rationalize working methods by appeal to scientistic lingo. For instance, “dopamine fasting” is really about eliminating distractions, with causation recklessly attributed in order to ascend to scientistic authority, as if claiming such authority was necessary in first place to justify exploits that work. Ha! You can't know how much dopamine or serotonin is transported at any given moment as you feel a certain way. For all I care, they may be just reflection of what already happened rather than the cause of anything – even a physical *simulation* of what is actually decided not in physical part of world at all. And when adherents of scientistic weltanschauung struggle, they will cope by saying that their dopamine or serotonin levels are “low” – a claim they cannot falsify, but which is fatalist – they assert their helplessness is generalized, and thus give up hope, but what proof of that do they have? They may be in reality struggling with something specific, a real-life problem to which they don't have a working solution, and which people they can consult aren't going to provide. Or they may be tormented by conscience, having made a moral compromise, or were nudged to pursue the goal not of their own choosing and now have lost persistence in what their heart was not into to begin with. Of course they will be feeling down! Not being able to do things of relevance sucks, and if you escape (tending to) relevance without solving the problem, by redefining (or attempting to redefine[18]) what is relevant – it is precisely cope. Ditto with being helpless against someone else's authority.

[18] One of most robust proofs that unconscious exists and won't let you so arbitrary redefine is that akrateia precisely manifests itself in such cases: when one has put a cloak of ignorance over things relevant. Manifestation of akrateia include: ‘laziness’ (not doing things one planned to do because they don't correspond to things actually relevant), ineptitude, mental blocks, meltdowns, outbursts, obsession over a person that won't let go (actually centered on proving others that you love or have loved the person and have been affected by it; love itself may have passed already) or – worst case – non-premeditated violent crime.

I gave my own version of dealing with addiction to distractions at the end of “On motivation and indecision”. You may not always be able to drop distractions cold turkey, but you can replace them with more consciously controlled ones, as well as learn to interrupt them whenever possible. This is a working technique I used myself, and it doesn't bother to seek scientific justification it. Those who try it will have all the justification it need, scientists can try to explain it on their own time, if they want, but whether it works or doesn't, doesn't depend on their explanations. So this is the first principle: **successful practice is the supreme justification, and things you can't personally falsify (such as causality) you shall not assert**. Seek solutions not causes. As for placebo effect: when the problem is serious (eczema, for example), bogus interventions do not consistently work, it becomes apparent rather quickly actually for the person taking it. Where “must know whether this is a placebo treatment” problem actually exists, is in practice of those who do interventions on others not themselves. For those who act upon themselves, repetition does eliminate solutions that only worked by chance.

The second principle is to **reject “too good to be true” (positivist) narratives**. It is an acid test that counters both pseudoscientific narratives and corrupt practices in science. If proposed to undergo some medical intervention (provided there is at all a reason in favor of it in first place), demand them to tell you about harm it is gonna do. As I said before, the most valuable part of science is about identifying fragility – facts about fragility. Not values: values you keep your own. Now if they deflect the question, if they try to convince you the intervention is safe, or that risk/reward is not your concern but doctor's, or appeal to authority of science – tell them to get lost. Without identifying fragility, it is not science, for the principle of causality is not just that there is a working mechanism, but that intervention doesn't magically aim to do good only, and instead does whatever the hell it is doing causally-wise. Any intervention that is presumed to not cause harm is a bogus intervention. You shall not tolerate them trying to push their values on you, they must describe to you the solution in terms of facts only – including necessary *all* the negative facts, *all* the risks – and let you evaluate risk from perspective of your value system, not theirs. And if you caught them hiding tail risk from you – even if they mentioned downsides but omitted the worst of them – this constitutes a breach of trust. Remember also that what happens between doctor and you, is no longer about science or only science: it is also whether hospital protocols do enough to address danger, to timely identify emergencies, and so on. Communication between you and doctor is broken? You are now at mercy of fate. When you hit the 0.5% chance that results in irreversible damage,

statistics don't matter – you are screwed. And there always are going to be people that fall within that 0.5%, simply because if you keep rolling dice with some low probability event, after rolling enough times that event will appear. Hence in real world, we are talking about fragility, not probability – and so we prepare for the worst case: the maximum damage being done.

Just as morality can prevent one for falling for false praise, or into vanity of relationship with someone significant, the above principles can prevent being shamed out of what one holds to be relevant, when those attacks on one's dignity come from the side of science. Yes, dignity encapsulates, among other things, capacity to make judgment in regards to one's own life – lack of such capacity would already mean lack of dignity. Indeed, earlier I said that privacy is dignity, and privacy is, among other things, about not becoming subject to reckless judgment of others. When mass collection picks external effects of what people do, it also can presuppose motives despite not knowing them, which would be a burden to disprove – in fact, any misinterpretations arisen from data collected through invasion of privacy, may be difficult to challenge. Or adversaries might be able to do with that data something that prevents you from taking a better course of action and thus being effective at challenging negative image of yourself in court, just like they can use your weaknesses to deliberately stage scenarios where you will act your worst. And when science is not used in capacity to aid those in power in casting said judgment, it can undermine one's confidence directly by making one judge themselves (and also, quite likely, by interpolating the judgment of their own entire character from their only select few of actions they remember at the time). Now, **if scientistic weltanschauung is harmful, why is it adopted in first place – especially by individuals not in power**?

A frequent cause of adopting scientism would be **out of hope for winning arguments**. I would have said “for the sake of winning arguments” – except those victories don't happen often, if at all. A correlated problem would be to rationalize their impotence – when people can't find solution, they start looking for causes, hoping to derive solution from causes, or convince another (former or present caregiver, parents) that it is their fault they are in this predicament. One could say, I should have given precedence to this variant – but I think they are firmly correlated, for who, in their impotence, did not sought to blame those who raised them for the way they turned out or for their supposedly flawed genetics? But the arguments seldom work out – why? because in most such cases, one can only speculate about causation but not prove it. Where the plaintiff tries to appeal to the authority of science, they are usually refuted by very real counterexamples of people who successfully overcame similar obstacles. It is imprudent to assert

causality based on scientific knowledge of processes that exist when one can in no way ascertain that they necessarily took place in this instance. In actuality, assertions of this nature would not be judged by scholars of science to be in accordance with scientific principles.

Those who bought scientism thinking it has utility in explaining harm religious or "selfless" people do to those people find later that it did not serve the original purpose. They appreciate the certitude about causation science gives, not understanding that the process by which they map real-word happenings to what is described by science, does not have scientific robustness or credibility. They seek an explanation with causes they can use as an argument. This goes for science. But scientism, is not about causes – it is about authority, as well as about trying to transform the discipline responsible for (preoccupied with) systematization of facts into something that can impose values. In the end, scientism only works for those who gain position of status as exactly scientists: for status can be used to win arguments, unlike attributions of causality done by laypersons. But both miss important lesson they could have learned from philosophy, say, of Schopenhauer: just because a recent cause is known (when it even is, in first place), does not mean the entire chain of causation can be known even if one can be assumed to exist. And what the hell with knowing causes, when the deal is what to do now about the situation in question? All you actually need to know is a method, and to know its failure modes, and methods don't necessary arrive from studying causation – they often arrive through serendipity, the lucky stumbling upon, whether through personal tinkering, or seeing examples of success by those who have already figured it out.

In a nutshell, those laypersons who cling to scientism, are victims of bait-and-switch: they forget what they came for, and are dragging along what is wearing them down. The entire talk therapy scam can be described as bait-and-switch: healthy person looks to acquire skills they lack, to address their present adversity (perhaps they even have a direct request for approach that would win arguments against their parents exactly?), to thwart their impotence by exactly ceasing to be impotent. Such is the vision of every person who have never before been to a therapist, who was not groomed as to what therapy is about but rather expects it to solve real problems. But when a weak-willed person, is not ready to quit therapy after very first session shows they won't get answers to what they seek here, but rather therapist would coerce them to change their vision, to override their perception about what is relevant and so on, they are gradually groomed – or let's not sugarcoat things, *broken* – to see things as therapy presents them, and to pursue only those goals which are definable in therapy setting. Woe on these

unfortunate persons who need help with real, external adversity, yet succumb to these lies out of desperation!

The defense against bait-and-switch that scientism and talk therapy presents would be: **don't rationalize away having gained irrelevant things instead of relevant things**. Pay attention to what you sought to gain originally, and what you actually were left with. Going from religion to scientism is like trading one bullshitting tradition to another. The jury is still out on which is worse – might vary on a person-by-person basis, i.e. the damage done by either may not be significant to a specific person because of particular strengths that person has, but be fatal to another. Also, adherents to either have their own picks of what they subscribe to and what they ignore – and some people, because of their character, have greater tendency to take things literally whereas others, again per their character, indulge greater liberty in interpreting things. A rhetorical question: people who want desperately to win arguments yet at the same time exactly suck at winning arguments, would exhibit which tendency of those?

To make matters worse, emotional well-being and stability is directly affected by (not) being able to relate to other people – to relate is to have in common what you find relevant with what others find relevant. Hence many people starting talk therapy, deteriorate – not as a result of beginning process of healing like therapists rationalize, but precisely because of being shamed out of what they found relevant and duped into pursuit of goals relevant to someone else. Subsequent improvements, including (and most often resulting indeed) from switching therapists, are because of that loss of authentic values being partly undone. These don't compensate for the total loss of clarity, however, one merely wins back *part* of what they have lost. It is possible for one to learn from such harm – to appreciate one's own authority, one's own skills, after having learned the price of abandoning them – but this is a rather costly learning, the kind no one deserves to be subjected to. Still, if you, having made a mistake of seeking advice from therapists, nonetheless survived it and learned to respect your own self and value your personal exploits, then I salute you for learning from adversity.

On lack of relatedness: many had misfortune to personally experience the lockdown policies in response to COVID-19 pandemic, and note that due to the fact the lockdowns and the recognition of pandemic by general public itself had started in year 2020 not 2019, the very dating in the virus name already demonstrates a devilish and crippling mental trick. A proper name for what we went through would be Lockdown-20 *panic* (*not pandemic*), or 2020's brand of totalitarianism. **We were not in this together – we were set against each other**, this divide being

stirred by rather aggressive rhetoric of politicians to redefine who is “anti-vaxxer” to anyone who doubts official narrative and necessity of vaccination mandates. I do remember “I don't care about your vaccination status – if you are against COVID-19 vaccine mandate, you are absolutely anti-vax”. I do remember “we shall prepare for an angrier world” – roughly two years after lockdown outbreaks, Russia would invade Ukraine.

Thus they (the uber-rich and their puppets) desired an angrier world – and their actions precisely did result in it. Though as is custom with foolish goals, it had plenty consequences undesirable for them and getting in the way of their other plans. Like, who is going to support “abolishing gender by 2030” (part of the infamous Great Reset agenda) now, when the need for military enlistment grows, problems that illegal migrants and refugees create reached the melting point, and diversity programs must be cut for real needs such as to have a proper defense budget. In this aftermath of pandemic celebration, globalists eat crap. ‘Pandemic celebration’, I say, because initially it presented for globalists *a welcome opportunity*: the flock will want to be saved, and when flock wants to be saved it readily gives away its freedom. However, their claims to provide safety were disproved by reality as not even booster shots protected one against COVID-19 infection. These globalist scum are not gone, because not actually held accountable – and they will attempt to return with vengeance therefore, as if not knowing how to quit. Still their claim to control reality has proven to have holes, which is the point I was getting at all along – it is too early to lose hope.

Back to scientism as the cause for low morale. **Should someone accuse you of being paranoid** (for example, for refusing some medical intervention and wanting to personally know the harmful “side-effects” not leave those to doctor's consideration), **ask yourself whether they will have their share of every negative consequence that happens to you**. If it is a concern about security – do they go to jail if you go to jail? If they will not face the equivalent consequences for you coming in trouble – your security is only your concern. So dismiss them. For in so far as they don't share negative consequences with you they lack all credibility in assessing *your* risks. They are merely gambling on your life, so to get out of their authority and power is a matter of self-defense. If you can't put yourself out of their reach (because institutionalized), find way to reduce the harm they are going to do to you. Everything is in when it comes to survival.

In order to maintain our morale, we do need to embrace our personal exploits as well – praxis one personally figured out, rather than was taught by someone else. This doesn't mean we shouldn't read books – but we probably don't

want to read hot scientistic garbage. Instead, we'd want to go with those books that stood up the test of time, or those that sparked our own interest naturally and not through soliciting of another person. Having a home library during growing up is paramount to establishing critical thinking (credit goes to Taleb for pointing this out) – the ability to think for oneself, and to approach science in the way of recognizing where a chain of causation may have alternative explanation – identifying risk factors of knowledge. As such, parents who leave child to the home library in order to dig answers by himself, are doing good. Note that of course personally made-up theories are often incorrect, but you don't have to start correct, only reach correctness through experimentation without getting irreversible damage – that is all. Which means, it is not so bad reading stuff not accurate as it is to naively believe that truth is set in stone and so come to regard any stuff read (and stumped by officials of any kind) as authoritative. **All that you read, shall be treated as merely food for thought and tinkering on your own, not a revelation to live by**. No exceptions; no exceptions whatsoever – not even this very work. And there will be healthy food and there will be junk food, yet the first might be bad for some person because of their personal intolerance and the latter not do much bad to another.

Aside from developing one's own tricks – of the kind represented by the first half of this guide – what else could be appropriate and foster good morale, if the answers of “science” and “religion” are both ruled out?

The personal answer I found is philosophy. The most desired philosophy would be one that directly defends both the theoretical possibility and the practical choice of self-determination: of going one's own way, not living life subservient to others nor repeating paths that others tread. The individual quest in this philosophy is for making a distinction. I've found many extant philosophies can provide a starting point for this, if one takes leisure with dismissing or reinterpreting certain things, that is, approaches philosophy eclectically. Yet indeed it would be preferable for a new philosophy directly build around this goal to be established. I have since concluded, that philosophy as is done academically is not the best approach, and the new philosophy must be one easily mapped to life and not require exegesis.

Thus I put together a certain weltanschauung, which emphasises practicality and “must be able to solve current problems, not wait till I grow wise”. In this weltanschauung, some things are a matter of belief – for beliefs can be practical, if they maintain morale and enable action, instead of helpless suffering. The attempt to prove certain things is foregone in favor of “**this gets shits done,**

therefore it is prudent to believe in it and is imprudent to do otherwise". Agency – or 'free will' specifically as in a matter of choosing one's actions – is thus one thing so asserted. Another is that reason can create or impose asymmetry where there was none. If I capture a prisoner, and stage him like in Buridan's ass "paradox" between two identical and equidistant meals – with the caveat this person really believes a rational choice in this paradox can't be made – he, per my philosophy, does have agency to decide whether he will stay "rational" and die, or go eat some, abandoning his defense of quantity-measure based "rationality".

With metaphysics thus, I rather proceed in manner of "this mental model remains so far consistent with my experience and provides effective heuristics of fragility" instead of "there is academically proven theory of causation which assembly of professors would applaud to". This is not because of "them filthy academics" mentality – redoing this work to include references and citations galore would drastically increase the effort needed to produce it, but the practically useful part would have still amounted to the same. A whole part of this treatise will be dedicated to metaphysics, for now I will leave this topic.

The practical approach to problems I've shown before in the first half of this guide. There is a cost to staying in limerence – thus one does not need assurance 'that they will find true love later when they mature' – but the resolution that will indeed set oneself free must come swiftly. And the whole accusation of immaturity is invalid. The person you experience attachment towards in limerence is not a 'favourite person' – it is a person you *think* you need to realize your destiny, and this is a belief that can be challenged, bringing a forced end to limerence. **The limerence is thus ended because it advances one's own interests to so end it**: to release oneself from burden, to no longer have to juggle feelings while not being allowed to freely express them at the same time, to no longer pursue a relationship which would erode one's life or one's self-esteem. Indeed: every time I forgot that it is not about 'another person not being good enough' but about **"not good to be in relationship nor in love with them"**, I ended up rediscovering it anew. This insight therefore I consider stable, consistent with life experience as in "proven (and rediscovered) many times, contradicted never".

Limerence have been already thoroughly covered by this work, the goal of present treatise on morality is to overcome fatalism and show how to persevere in this crazy New World. The question I must focus then, is how to address fear, when putting blinds won't make danger go away. How to accept the physical possibility of defeat yet strive for a victory, instead of pretending threat does not exist. So we must observe first, this is not about lacking fear – the instinct of self-preservation,

self-preservation being relevant concern – but rather how one *confronts* it. That is, threat is attended to, even if it cannot yet be destroyed; one develops a strategy, it may succeed or fail, but in so far as said strategy can be pursued, that is it. You focus on what you are able to do, even if very little, and eliminate (or avoid) things that would have made you more fragile. Success won't come from abandoning fight, so fighting becomes a virtue in itself. Shall you fall, you fought with honor – you didn't desert in cowardice.

Let's see how I've done it. Unlike examples so far in this guide, this example won't be a fictional one.

Example 1

Summary: In year 2020, amused by Western Establishment's dishonorable agenda against O9A, I decided to archive a few their websites (mostly blogs) in case they get pulled down. At the time, there was no pressing concern to polish and release them, so I would only attend to that at the end of year 2023. This task gave me something of personal relevance to succeed at by myself alone – without help of others.

The archive is available at https://archive.org/details/o9a-dm-universe – select zip format to download.

To start with: pandemic sucked. Prior to society's collapse, my daily outdoors running routine was the source of good mood to me. No, I was not an athletic sort – while I've already completed a 100K run prior to that point, I viewed running as merely instrumental to self-transcendence, a journey where one goes out of the common path and challenges one's 'fate', one's limitations. I have no outstanding talent nor motivation to do physical stuff in general, just mastered enough to do one sort of activity: to run, and run a lot, and try to be fast yet. So when they started shoving people indoors, I did not have an established exercise routine I could do in my apartment – mere fitness never motivated me. This meant I went from doing a lot of running to doing absolutely nothing.

All my contacts prior to that point were also real-life ones, or people whom I knew in real-life prior to migration – I was never the one for so-called social networks or these spy-bugs called smartphones. Hardly anything social about the former, and rather not fond about battery drain on the latter, but most of all: online is just not a valid way to connect with other people for me.

By the time I got to doing this project, I resumed running outdoors – even added cycling to the mix. But now I was doing all the outdoors stuff mostly alone, feeling progressively more and more estranged from other athletes. My social circle started collapsing: while I have initially acquired some new contacts (not from athletic world), they were of low quality and did not survive even a year. Fuelled by spite towards those who engineered the lockdown (stay-at-home) disaster, I looked to do something personally fulfilling, to which I could apply my programming skills. For there is disparity in our social skills and what compromises we are willing to make, hence the collective response to pandemic hit me harder (both mentally and socially wise) than it would most of people.

I never had stable interest in O9A, so I did not check up on it frequently before pandemic. Now that I was forced to spend more time online, I indeed took notice of the rotten agenda by so-called ‘intelligence services’ against O9A and contemplated to interfere with this agenda. However, after initial survey of the state of existing archiving software I've concluded that it needs improvement, so I set the priority to get material archived first, polish later. The rather elaborate setup and complementary programs I wrote or adapted for this purpose, are covered in the articles within archive, and the source code of programs I wrote or modified is packaged alongside it. Here, I will just state the purpose of that all: to obtain website archives anonymously (through Tor), and ensure that using offline archives even on machine with Internet connection doesn't phone online – no live links that lead to websites are left, no scripts are present on archived pages. A byproduct was that ads were stripped from pages as well: offline mirror is more pleasant to navigate than original pages, and does not have endless scrolling crap.

Since privacy-minded archivists might be interested in such technology, I must warn them that pdf files were not scanned for links, and that embedding links in pdf files is possible without them being flagged by software I made – a disastrous oversight as far as the initial concept of “nothing phones home on machine with Internet connection” is concerned. But a privacy-minded person must also be informed that the only way to prevent internet access from any files they view is for machine to have no network connection indeed. Otherwise, there were two main challenges I did not solve in year 2020: archiving then Cloudflare-protected faux-official website o9a.org, and changing file structure of an offline mirror post-archival so as to eliminate duplicate files and facilitate serendipity. The link sanitization on the other hand, was solved within a month – at the beginning of autumn 2020 I

already had working offline mirrors, while with certain inconveniences and not yet sewn together, quite usable if one is not picky.

What prevented me from finishing work back then? It was a differing motive between having archives available for personal use and showing them to the world. The first part was approached with “get shit done” mentality, and was thus done lightning fast. With the second part, however, I detoured into ambitious overengineering and optimization-for-the-sake-of-optimization improvements – trying to justify the work done, as actual bans on O9A material were not then forthcoming. Key insight: what was personally relevant, I knew; what would be relevant to others – and *who* are the relevant others – that was then to me an open question. The answer to this question I would figure out in renewed attempt at the end of 2023: the technology I made, the focus on privacy and right-to-read (without being judged) that it enables, would have been really nice to have when I started. The archiving software that existed prior my efforts, while more intricate technology, operated in a world where censors didn't exist, and its priority was retention of external links over privacy – the reverse of what was needed in a world of malicious actors of today, such malicious actors being perpetrators of global surveillance (the actual terrorists). Preemptive and prejudiced action without trial has nothing to do with law enforcement nor protection of public – conventional surveillance that fights actual crime is required to obtain a court order in any sane jurisdiction.

But what really prompted me to repick it 3 years later, was unrelated to politics-caused strife or grudge against the peace-above-privacy world: my social support net not only diminished to zero, it became obvious this is not changing any time soon. The only people I met during that period were shallow individuals who have withdrawn from external challenges into “ignorance is bliss”. These people, had no appreciation for reliability, for promises and deadlines. Whatever I couldn't do myself, was unattainable through others also. So I've looked into what I am good at doing then: finishing the “O9A universe” project, was exactly within my ability. Amidst such work, a next step was conceived: a fight against atomicity of modernity, from which the current work you are reading, has branched off – as a sum of prior acquired knowledge tested in relation to survival. So my real motive that led to work's completion was a private (self-serving) one – it was about enduring through loneliness and alienation. I wouldn't have completed it for any other purpose: I was rather conflicted about whether I should, for those blogs featured views I very hard disagree with (examples

being: whitewashing Russian invasion of Ukraine, sympathizing with Islam depravity and this whole fetishism over fascism). Nonetheless, I did not censor those views, for it was a binary decision for me from the beginning: either to upload it all as is, or not upload anything at all – not even software I made.

The fortunate factor (for completion of the project) was that I improved my programming skills between 2020 and 2023. I remember myself thinking, that “I wouldn't have been able to write this in 2020 – for the requisite knowledge came from personal projects I delved into since then”. Still, the final pass over the universe took longer than I expected, and during said work the fear of getting raided by the police had grown intense. Precautious, maybe, but not ungrounded. I had to make new archives and thus generated a lot of traffic on anonymous network, possibly drawing attention to myself. Coincidentally, I also had hardware failure within first month of work, and a neighbor asking for help with reading their poorly formatted flash drive – which readers versed in cybersecurity will immediately recognize as a potential hazard. I even contemplated to kill myself upon project's completion, in order to guarantee that I die free rather than get imprisoned – in general, I thought quite a lot about suicide that year, due to war-torn state of the world and absence of considerations for justice in decision-making of United States (hence lack of hope), while the rest of world lacked resourcefulness to do anything about the situation (and I lamented being incapable to do anything about it as well).

But, I always had that stance, of not letting other people be the cause of my fall: not for them to affect my fate. When I emerged successful, all past struggles seemed irrelevant, and against the pessimism I've developed the conviction that a brighter future can be still fought for, or even if that be a doomed fight, one nonetheless ought to fight for it to the best of their ability. I noted parallels between perseverance that carried me – even amidst doubt in my own ability, as if this perseverance was external to my ego, reaching destination inevitable – and Schopenhauer's World-as-Will concept, which prompted me to reread his penultimate work. Of his remarks about life being full of suffering, though, I rather disagree that suffering, being more frequent occurrence, necessary outshadows the moments without it. No, the reverse is true: **the high of great success in one's own eyes, although transient, wipes out all preceding pain.** Or a succinct and poetic rendering, if you prefer: the brief moments of personal pride outweigh the boats of suffering.

> I decided to keep on living then. For by completing the universe, I have confronted the fear of being possibly targeted by intelligence services while not having people who would care to help – since I got to my destination before anything I feared had happened. All the petty hate and animosity I experienced from others, was then rendered irrelevant.

So this was my story of conquering fear, and electing to live through (rather than commit suicide in anticipation of) potential unpleasant developments of modernity. As for eccentrics (to name better known examples: Nietzsche, David Icke) attracting far-right crowd, it is not the only crowd they attract. That among people who hold unconventional views you'll find those pursuing less than noble ideals, doesn't mean they are the only people. Eccentrics may voice truth that official narratives deny or undermine, which truth corresponds to what is relevant to some people and their personal struggles, while nothing else accounts for it. People seek answers elsewhere because Establishment tries to sweep grievances under the rug and impose some standardized life devoid of personal meaning.

Primary reason for skewed statistics that we find many extremists among dissidents, is that few people dare to disagree with doxa of their time: for most fear loneliness intensely, and would always go with the crowd for the sake of not being left alone. As I'll show later, **people who fear loneliness this much are in fact incapable of defending any moral principles**. I also disagree with a polemical argument about “alienated youth falling for some ideology” for it reiterates and reinforces what alienated one in first place. Alienation of youth is not a petty concern: it is System's failure, and not of grooming one into complacent citizen, but rather of providing one their natural needs and opportunities for self-fulfillment. Indeed I believe that people are entitled to self-determination – to be able to live on their own terms and have their needs met – rather than be coerced to embrace abstractions such as “life is beautiful, you only have to adopt this view”. Human life is not beautiful on its own, much less when one has to fight one's way through it alone like I had to. Likewise, abstractions are not valid means to escape real problems, let alone solve them.

For this reason, I do not embrace any current within modern political thought, as modern political thought is rooted exactly in abstract ideas. I am also not nostalgic about Ancient Greece and Rome – I think they did useful contributions, and constitute important legacy of humanity that shall be studied indeed, but I don't dream of returning to those times. The path to a better future is yet to be

figured out, and neither abstractions nor idealization of distant past will help in this matter.

The Theory of Action is precisely about **being ruthlessly effective in a treacherous world**: the world which lost respect for reliability, and where presumption of "no one can intend to harm me" does not hold. Its primary lesson is that you can be got, but you may also end up being faster than your adversaries. It is also against being persuaded out of what you personally hold relevant: against a technique similar to yet distinct from gaslighting, when other people try to make you doubt not your sanity but rather your capacity to ascertain relevance in life. At its extreme, lacking confidence in one's own authority is in practice scarcely different from lacking sanity. For example, re assertion whether I am targeted by Establishment or not: to adopt either conclusion as a certainty would equally be a fallacy, and yet erring one way would be costlier than the other. I do know, however, that I definitely have things to hide as well as things to fear. I chose to confront that fear rather than pretend there are no reasons for it. I have thus, for myself, solved the problem of maintaining morale in the face of uncertain fate, without succumbing to cope – without resorting to the "ignorance is bliss" cheat.

There is also no universal chief good in my philosophy – not even that elusive thing called "happiness". Happiness is a mirage. Most of the day actually sucks ass, you manage to forget it. The reverse case happens too – achieving many things, but remaining tormented, because there are still things of relevance where one doesn't know where to start or where it will go. Easy it seems to make oneself happy by arbitrary redefining what is relevant, but that is exactly foolish, not wise: for such happiness is ephemeral and disturbed by a never-ending boat of akrateias. The latter also contains an opportunity for this lavish life to be thoroughly obliterated by fate – to be replaced by life scorned and/or for one to develop 'anhedonia'[19]. Apes are also better at being happy then us, so if happiness were the meaning of life, we would then ought to consider apes as our superiors. Yet it is in resolving hard necessities that self-development is rooted, which implies one is exposed to a lot of suffering and turmoil: a human being can only avoid them if he is both void of ambition and concern for others, that is, if he is a parasite whose lavish life is sustained by others. One rises to greatness through overcoming significant challenges, and such instances of individual overcoming – importantly, not mere

[19] Anhedonia is plain incapacity to feel any pleasure and lasts for years. Though there is an eventual release from it which happens spontaneously. Now the question is: if happiness were the meaning of life, how does one find meaning during anhedonia? Yet finding such meaning is precisely possible, for even outside of anhedonia, happiness is not the true answer.

survival – advance the species. **Contentment is the antithesis of evolution – the goal of a human being is to surpass others**. Therefore my philosophy doesn't offer happiness. It has great striving (as in strife), and great yearning. Unlike in Stoicism, the pursuit of fiercely contested offices and positions of status within society is good in my book – and indeed necessary. Be those political, athletic, military, academic etc. There are going to be losers, and there are going to be winners, and the greatest folly is to resent the successful instead of trying to succeed yourself.

The absence of a single fixed once-and-for-all final destination does not imply non-existence of moral compass, however. Moral compass is necessary both to avoid being baited into one's demise, and not to poison the well one drinks from: not to endanger one's own survival nor that of others, whose undoing would also mean one's own undoing. This latter part is far less visible in modern society, for repercussions may come only generations later, and thus there is no direct impact that one feels: e.g. seems that one can benefit one's family by betraying society, but it is not actually true. This bidirectional equality between genuine fulfilment of one's interests and the interests of society (what is moral) is not an original point from me – it is the final point defended in **"De Officiis" ("On Duties") by Cicero, Marcus Tullius**. Cicero is indeed correct with respect of man who does care about what happens to society long-term as a result of his actions, whereas to take care of the short-sighted and uncaring human specimens we will have to – as a collective – embrace and enforce Nassim Nicholas Taleb's idea of "skin in the game". I will elaborate upon this after I cement the difference between social norms and morality.

But first I'm going to outline the primary axises of moral compass. These primary axises are the **four cardinal virtues**, taken from classical philosophy (that is, of Ancient Greece and Rome), and I will prefer these terms over other possible translations: **practical wisdom, justice, temperance and fortitude**. My own definitions of terms – aligned with my experience – are as follows:

- **temperance.** Restraint of appetites, selectivity of pursuits, avoidance of compulsions and of excess. Wary of unsolicited favors and attached strings, doesn't acquire tactical benefits that would lead to strategic downfall. Is not minimalism nor frugality, but precisely "not adding fragility". If one's physical stature would be compromised by intentional deprivation this is to be considered an excess the same way as is gluttony.
- **fortitude.** Retaining a composed, alert and sound mind in the face of adversity. Fortitude is not a bravado, not ignorance of danger, but rather undiminished

attendance to what is relevant, unconfused, unshattered by danger it acknowledges. Avoiding or circumventing the threat if possible, confronting it if this is strictly necessary, does not take stupid risks.

- **practical wisdom.** Expedient – yet not short-sighted – approach to problem-solving, arisen from live-long personal experience. Necessary eliminates all concerns irrelevant to the problem at hand, and hard-avoids methods that would hinder the goal or prevent it from being accomplished – thus doesn't induce feelings of shame. A person who is practically wise doesn't ascribe themselves authority, but by way of honest and working advice is able to solicit it without making honest people feel diminished. Emphasis on that it is honest people who won't feel diminished: those who contend for authority (who elected authority as the goal in itself) may find their project thwarted and thus will “cope and seethe”.

- **justice.** Resolving disputes between people in a fair and scrupulous way that upholds individual worth. The latter means that such judgment doesn't reduce one to a ‘number’ measured against the numbers, or deprive one of their agency, though it may deny them what they covet. Justice does require that to each man or woman there is a reserved share, even if they be worst criminal – for example, in Western jurisprudence, the minimum provided is “the right to fair trial”, “the last word” and requirement that those sentenced to imprisonment are not treated in degrading manner.

What I mean by ‘practical wisdom’ is not constrained to action: Cicero's earliest speeches (“Pro Quinctio”, “Pro Roscio Amerino”) can too be considered examples of practical wisdom, examples especially notable for Cicero then had to address an older and quite distinguished audience and thus couldn't rely on prior recognition. The adjective ‘practical’ I use in order to distinguish the way of true sage from the ill manners observed in modern experts and religious apologists and their condescending speech escapades – to thus distinguish true wisdom from the depravity that is Magian religions' redefinition of wisdom as submission to authority.

The above virtues are understood precisely as moral compass, rather than invariant properties of character: this means, that it is possible for one to fail to consult moral compass at any time, or that it possible for one who has previously had a healthy sense of morals, for this sense and/or trust in its authority to become damaged so to speak, as a result of social adversity. This is a practical observation, born from experience – that sustained social adversity can confound one's understanding

of moral matters, and so can moving between social strata or environments, when those environments exhibit wildly different customs. As such, exhibiting virtue is not a matter of instinct or habit alone, but requires attendance of reason. Clue attendance: reason can engage moral compass or it can indulge its own preferences, interests, or arbitrary maxims. One source of non-moral maxims is cope – cope is distinguished from positive solutions to adversity in that cope arises over impotence and lack of solutions. Both cope and true solutions may *seem* to be born out of experience, yet they are not the same thing, and of very distinct quality. Thus in search for expedient approach, maxims that arose from cope must be identified and rejected. Another source of non-moral maxims are 'memes' – trivial and error-prone value-judgments fit for plebeians, such as pertaining to perceived character differences of woman to man. These are countered by self-honesty and by rejecting weltanschauung that is crude, vulgar and seeks to reduce all to the 'plain' level.

One's entrenched views can also be probed in a certain manner, if one is willing to recognize and dig for evidence in one's experience that conflicts with one's held views, even if they are supported by some other fraction of their experience. For views that seem supported by experience might be coherent with only some of it, and it only takes refusal to engage in self-deception, in order to acknowledge that this contradiction does refute them. In later parts of this treatise, I'll speak more on self-reflection, as well as how to avoid desperate action and refuse extremist thoughts when steered by dialectics of conflict (or otherwise social adversity).

As for ancient sentiment that says, paraphrased: "having one virtue means having all, lacking one virtue means having none" – this is not a perspective of practical philosophy. The Theory of Action instead posits that a person can, over the course of life, be inconsistent in practice of virtues, and that both regression and reacquisition of virtues are definitely possible. And if one needs to check each of them and repair one's moral compass, or consult them in order to make necessary robust judgment in a demanding (tricky) situation, it is the conclusion about how virtues are defined that matters.

Similar judgment is in regards to primacy of virtue vs primacy of duty – this dispute about foundations of ethics between deontological and virtue systems is best left for theoreticians. Not meant disrespectfully – it is just the way it is. Both deontological and virtue ethics are good in my book, but the most important thing is to recognize what is relevant and what one is to do in real-life situations.

Through life experience, it is also possible to forge one's moral code that will be resilient against societal confusion – this subject will be covered in

next part (“How moral convictions get adopted, tested and their relation to our agency”). The practical application of this – and hence why this is desired – would be to prevent akrateia when one has, for whatever reason, to relocate, whether within society, or to a different country, including because one must flee because of war or impending war (hence not necessary at one's leisure but because of harsh necessity). Because haste-aggravated akrateia entails with its a possibility of spontaneous violent crime, and the different forms of akrateia are correlated, this is also in interests of society that individuals develop such resilience, which has maturity and life experience as requisite. There is a caveat, however, that whether personal code is moral depends on whether it is conformant with what is morality – arbitrary personal maxims don't become moral simply because upheld with the same zeal. It is necessary then, to answer then what is morality, to explain why I chose to distinguish it from social norms, and why I do stand by enforcing said distinction.

First, the clarity of (and thus also respect for) moral knowledge is much eroded in the modern world, because ‘norms’ vary wildly between social groups – when you travel around society horizontally and vertically a lot, you will know as much. These social norms, are arbitrary conventions maintained by fear of exclusion, and they often serve someone's private interests, or popular tastes (what is “cool” or fashionable). I find it unfitting that these things be called morality then – the proper thing to liken them to would instead be ‘financial pyramid’. **The only thing I find worthy to call morality, is that which pertains to survival, both collective and individual, and also negotiates these two aspects in necessary fair manner**. Cue words “*sanity is not statistical*” from George Orwell's “Nineteen Eighty-Four”. And while it is unusual to overlook that which individual must contribute to the collective, it is, however, often overlooked what collective owes to individual, apart from that which is given to him by a legal entity such as government and from abstract doctrine of ‘human rights’.

For human being is a *tribal* not abstractly social animal. Tribal beast to be specific, **tribal beast gifted with reason – to be absolutely correct**. This, however, is not a statement in favor of return to primitive way of life, nor is it an argument for some misguided “far right” cause that somehow enlists tribal order as prototype for the order that they seek (I never found any similarities by the way). Rather, it sets the criteria for judging whether society provides what is truly expected from it. Yes, there are expectations – standards to be met – you can't justify the status quo as if it were meant by Nature. While complete harmony would be incompatible with advances of humanity, there is a difference between acceptable deviation and unacceptable deviation. Remember that real world antifragile stuff

is antifragile up to a point – load too much onto it, and it will still break. While some discomfort is necessary for evolution, if you place one to fight uphill battle with drained resources, they will perish. The current state of affairs is too much deviation from tribalism – this is why emerge cliques, cults and organized crime – surrogates of tribes. These parasitic faux-clans leach off antifragility from larger society, yet their arrival is inevitable – predicated on the lack of genuine bonds in modernity and non-relenting thirst for such bonds (for reliability) built into our nature. The true solution to these problems would be to combat atomicity – to make society where healthy tribal units do exist, and find acceptable balance between the interests of tribe and the interests of society.

It must be acknowledged then, that separation-of-otherness is indeed inherent in human psyche – as "*blood is thicker than water*" idiom would indicate. And it is not a bad thing just a fact of life. But even if one comes from unlucky or unsupportitive family, the only way to be a loser is if you intend to live for yourself only and don't leave an impact on humanity. To pursue happiness is thus to be a loser. This is not to be mistaken for advocating people-pleasing (servility): you are not to surrender conquest and competition, but embrace pursuit of harshly contested things – the goal of life being outside one's finite life, which goal is not glory per se but rather the feat that would be deserving of said glory. Now, assuming you are not estranged from your tribe, there is a priority for whose share is first; yet although tribe should take first share of one's gain, you are not to step on humanity's interests in first place to pursue gain for the tribe: if tribe can only gain at expense of humanity, this venue is not tenable. Priorities do shift when one enters public service, which is precisely what service is about, and the reason it is called *service* – it is different from any other job due to negation of tribe-first rule. Yet preexisting alienation from family does not correlate with being fit for public service – to this end, one may seek another way to leave an impact, a personal one discovered by learning from adversity. The means to do so are exactly covered further in this treatise.

While 'fear of reproach' could have been but *one* of ways to preserve customs that enabled survival in the *distant* past, in non-tribal societies it diverges far away from them. Once society goes to scale, fear of reproach is no longer consistent with what enables survival, but rather with whatever furthers private interests of those with authority or influence. Even in tribal societies, the reason of convergence would be fierce selection: those tribes whose social norms did not benefit survival have gone extinct.

The outlook of moral realism that would explain the presence of sustainable diverse traditions evident in present world, would be that morals were not derived from arbitrary preferences of some person-in-chief (like Nietzsche was wont to believe), but rather *ascended* to through elimination of most reckless and the societies entrusted to them, which also led the more developed – but not yet centralized – societies to recognize the disease of tyranny and tyrants themselves as harbingers of bad fortune. Indeed this is the message conveyed in Ancient Greece drama, particular in works of Sophocles such as “Oedipus Tyrannos” and “Antigone”. This fateful culling explains selection without universal convergence to a single moral tradition: adjustments to customs were done on as-needed basis – with those societies which have not made the lucky amendments having perished in obscurity – and leaves room for belief that true morality is still independent of what is discovered of it (reality vs narrative), but that moral epistemology remains hard. The emergence of Empires and emperors, however, manifested the possibility for societies to leave the gravity of being directly and consistently checked by survival – only to find that when fierce storm finally arrives, the whole society is shattered into pieces.

Either way, societies didn't sustain themselves on ‘fear of reproach’. **Society does owe some things to individual**: the engagement of individual in society is (supposed to be) reciprocal, with not only individual attending to social concerns, but society also attending to grievances of individual, as well as providing certain opportunities that eliminate the burden of having to claw for some needs on one's own. This collective service to individual is important: it makes the difference between thriving and surviving. If one has to tend to his own survival constantly, to meet all instrumental needs by himself or make do without some of them, then he is scarcely able to contribute to societies' advance, even if he wants to.

We, however, must distinguish between chasing the heights (making a distinction) and chasing mundane success (social status): most career-chasers I met, were exactly people who haven't been quite provided by their family. When society abstains itself from individual struggles, the result is individuals whose ambition is exclusively self-serving and vane. Their ambition is driven by public opinion and not by pursuit of actual positive impact on humanity: status-chasing appeals to groupthink. On the other hand, survivors of more severe life struggles may still have desire to contribute – however, meaningful opportunities to do so won't be present if they are still fighting through life on their own.

A side remark if you are in survivors camp: career-chasers are the worst choice for a companion. They offer zero emotional availability and zero reliability.

Sometimes, however, these people have out-of-work achievements, which may lure us to appreciate them – these tend to be byproduct of life choices they made prior to career-climbing, when their activities didn't pile up to the point when they had to turtle up and estrange others. Since they sorted out their priorities in the end, it is worth noting that other people don't make the top of that priority list, if at all. It is not always possible to avoid career-chasers in advance, as the transition may happen after we already befriended them, or because some semblance of extroversion remains from their former life, so you will have to go through the motions described in first part of this guide.

I must also caution my audience against those who would want to make us 'happy' against our will – no one can actually enjoy life if their will is subjugated by another or others, whatever the intentions or declared motives behind such subjugation. I despise utilitarians the same way I despise efficient managers. They produce results that are *in (the name of) best interests of all with no factual regard to interests of anyone*, except interests of those in power – if utilitarians in question are consciously malevolent rather than merely incompetent. Utilitarians are in reality either hedonists lacking self-honesty, or otherwise conscious liars framing their own private interests as that of general public – **hubriati, metaphorically "lizard men"**. Importantly, when I say hedonists, I don't mean only egoistic hedonists – I mean hedonism in broad sense, including variants such as Epicurean one, which does seek benefit to friends and regards friendship as beneficial, and thus forms the basis of "utilitarian intuition". Yet this white-washed 'intuition', is in reality the lowly instinct, and remains the sole one consistently only in those living in the present moment. This manner of living is disgraceful for a human being, for it reduces one not just to beasts but to reptiles even. Pleasure is neither to be avoided nor pursued for its own sake, it is a welcome side-effect of wise decisions, but not to be the conscious end-goal.

While reader may have negative associations with the use of reptilian metaphor, this is more than a nod to David Icke. Lizards don't have tribal or social instinct – they are hedonists by nature. However, as human beings, we do have a choice, and I would argue that it makes no sense for us to imitate the life of animal kingdom, much less the life of the less developed animals than even beasts. Thus on The Great Reset agenda, my comment is the following. The environment in which you own nothing, exists: it is called jail. I much prefer outside the bars, myself – being broke yet free is better than being provided for.

The reality is that **conditions necessary for (human being's) striving rather than mere survival, are NOT interchangeable with each other** – hence reifying

these prerequisites as ‘pleasure’ (or ‘happiness’) and then suggesting it can be quantified, is not correct. Not quantifiable to begin with, and yet profoundly important are: 1) freedom, that is the least amount of interventions into one's life from others that is possible, 2) close friendship or intimacy in broad sense (not to do with sex at all), that is shared concerns and values, as well as non-hierarchical cooperation 3) abundance, in a sense of learning opportunities and opportunities to tinker with stuff and thus figure out personal exploits. To this degree, must be stated that copyright law, patent law, and other forms of artificial scarcity (Defective By Design) are *obstacles* to abundance – and thus of negative social value – whereas unencumbered, libre software and freely circulating works are of positive social value. This observation is from what I, as software engineer, found to hinder or help learning; Richard Stallman's experience during his days at MIT – and his subsequent activism – is also well-aligned with this observation. I also really despise when philosophical texts are not freely available – and by freely, I mean not just free of charge, but without subscriptions and other obstacles, including text available only to borrow rather than to just download. Want your philosophy read then make it fucking available, otherwise don't even bother writing philosophy.

The list above is not at all exhaustive, as many situational needs exist: e.g. those that arise from experiencing grief or struggling with something personally important, and where having meaningful support will make a difference of how fast one can recover and proceed at that task. A determined individual such as myself can still progress even with total lack of support (this is how both universe and this guide were made), yet the going does get rather slow here and there. And where one's work would benefit others but is scarcely meaningful to oneself, without support it is likely to be aborted altogether.

These are also favorable conditions for success, rather than success in itself; the means, and not yet all the means, but rather those which are favorable to obtain from society instead of having to claw them out on one's own. While they enable individuals to strive rather than merely survive, **strive they (individuals) still must on their own, and the goal to strive in life is for them, and not others, to define**. Think of the distinction between having a cake at hand and being forced to eat one, as well as that to be forced to bake cakes against one's volition or against one's ability is not a decent life at all. Nor should all that one desires in life be a damn cake.

The availability of these resources depends on culture, and thus on those values parents instill in their kids. But culture, it must be understood, evolves naturally,

so the synthetic approach such as based on utilitarian (pseudo)morality is not suitable to make such adjustments, nor would some infernal mandate trying to ensure everyone gets their cut (like in incels' fantasies) be suitable. Striving conditions would be best ensured by eliminating obstacles to them on collective level: obstacles being conditions where people win by sacrificing these concerns, and sacrifice these concerns in order to win (the rat race).

Fundamentally thus, *none* of conditions that distinguish human beings from beasts can be served by economics and economic theories. Losses in any of these cannot be offset by material gain, and while personal success can help one through alienation, one is still operating in survival mode when they have to tackle all by themselves. If I recall correctly, homo sapiens seems to be the only kind that does funerals, which means our place in evolution ladder indeed arose from non-economics/non-utility driven cooperation and concern for others. And barter, far as I know, took place between strangers rather than within a tribe. The purpose of limerence is also not related to sex either but to deep reciprocal *understanding* and cooperation, hence limerence *in itself* is not a problem – the problem is "dog eat dog" society: capitalism and atomicity; whereas individually, it becomes a problem when one is coping with external adversity through unrequited limerence, or refuses to let go of relationship where one is not respected.

The doctrine of consumerism – that views strong economy as both necessary and (the horrors) sufficient condition for striving within society – has ruined heuristic of seeking a good family person as a partner. Some even became obsessed with 'cool' people, 'swiping' them like commodities on dating services, but they are not going to have stable marriage with them: these 'cool' people are only good for self-gratification. "Look what a person I got! I am so cool because I have this person, everybody envies me." If one then pursues a stable relationship with this mentality, they are all set for break-up grief – if not divorce drama – down the road. The other road is promiscuity, leaving which either leads to the previous scenario, and bouncing back to promiscuity in all likelihood, although on a rare chance it can lead to actually abandoning consumerist culture. For the latter to happen when one is going through crisis, they must abandon the idea of chasing pleasure as means to cope with lack of existential fulfilment. Now, in so far all these people are duped by consumerism, they narrow down the dating pool for other young people who are not, which is why we have decline in stable families: pursuing any other road than promiscuity exposes one to feeling hurt, whether because of one's entitlement, or because the other person was not serious. People who can't endure this – especially those vulnerable to peer's judgment – are susceptible to loss of moral compass in the aftermath of said experience.

To carry moral compass through relational struggles, requires thick skin and not caring about opinion nor smirks of others: **not equating social norms with morality, as well as not making one's identity about feelings**.

Again we come back to the topic that social norms and morality are different, but what would be telling the difference? The key is a rather important aspect of relations between society and individual, which took humanity long to figure out: one of justice – of negotiating the disputes, of righting the wrongs and ensuring that society doesn't deteriorate from cycle of vengeance. "Oresteia" by Aeschylus is a Greek drama trilogy that tells of times before certain customs were laid, and how this change came to be (which Greeks, much like everything, attributed to be the work of gods) and how it is valuable; in "Agamemnon" it tells that pathei-mathos, or "learning from adversity", was too a law given to mortals by Zeus and which law thus gave meaning to suffering. I can barely tolerate Greeks for their misogyny, though, so I am glad we came a long way from that. As for the answer I promised, the quote below from the late work of Kant, "The Metaphysics of Morals", represents to me a definite way to ascertain the difference between arbitrary tastes (even be they preference of majority) and morality. This derivation traces itself to a certain legal formula found in Justinian's "Institutiones", a formula Kant a bit too hastily attributes to Ulpian (precise author is unknown) – "*iuris praecepta sunt haec: honeste vivere, alterum non laedere, suum cuique tribuere*":

Quote

In this division we may follow Ulpian, by slightly modifying our understanding of his legal formulæ,—a meaning perhaps darkly present to his own mind, and which can be evolved from them with great ease and elegance.

1. Honeste vive—(be an honest man).—Juridical honesty or uprightness consists in upholding one's personal worth, as a man, against all others,—an obligation capable of being expressed by the following formula:—"Suffer thyself not to become the bare mean of others; and if thou serve them, be also their end." This obligation is afterwards explained, as founded on the rights of humanity in a man's own person—(lex justi).

2. Neminem læde—(do no man wrong)—even though as a consequence thou must abandon all connections with others, and go out of society—(lex juridica.)

3. Suum cuique tribue—(give each man his own).—Understood literally, these words are void of meaning, for that cannot be given to another which he already has. The formula can therefore alone signify, Enter with thy fellow-men into that state—society—where each man's own is defended from the violence of his neighbour—(lex justitiæ).

These three classical formulæ make up one entire division of the principles of law, and found a division of juridical obligation into internal—external—and that composite obligation, which is constituted by subsuming the second under the principle of the first.

Source: *Immanuel Kant, "The Metaphysics of Ethics", 1796 (translation by J.W. Semple. 3rd edition)*

In these statements, I find the spirit of morality, and therefore consider these obligations to be not merely juridical but also and importantly meta-ethical. This view can be supported through the same work of Kant – and was probably intended (though if not, it still corresponds to what I find morality to be): as expounded in "Of the division of a system of the Metaphysics of Ethics" section occurring in the referenced work before these, all duties that are not directly ethical, indirectly become ethical too – through it being virtuous to act in the manner consistent with legal obligation even when one cannot be externally compelled to do so.

Commitment to morality is thus distinguished by readiness to uphold it even in opposition to others and face personally unfavorable consequences of said defense. Importantly, one must be prepared to go into exile or otherwise withdraw from community – the corollary is that individuals who absolutely fear loneliness are incapable of defending any moral principles, even if they can ephemerally perform the corresponding duties in absence of opposition. For if only in absence of challenges they seem to act morally, then it is not commitment to morality that guides them, but going with the grain – whenever the flock will go, they will too. Furthermore, I think Kant too hastily narrows down the meaning of "suum cuique tribue" to defense against violence coming from individuals acting out of their own interest – I take it to mean also defense of customs that establish a certain inviolable share to those grieving, and even to prisoners some dignity, meaning that one has inalienable rights which are defended from state and collective entities (whose actions are thus proxied by individuals acting upon

what they mistook to be a ‘greater’, potentially even ‘selfless’, purpose), not just other individuals.

Either way, there are things one must necessary stand for, even if it makes one lose standing with others. These necessary things is what is called ‘duty’ – that which keeps society from falling apart – and hence humans are distinguished by their stance towards duty. I regard precisely those as plebeians who reject such notion, and who instead reason from pleasure and comfort, be it in utilitarian way or otherwise. “Plebeians”, or “plebs”, is an insult I will be throwing around quite often in this treatise.

Honor is thus exemplified by willingness to face personal ills for standing up for what is necessary, and otherwise by willingness to take risks in defense of others – but the latter case must be measured against one's ability, for to escalate the situation by one's own weakness or incompetence is not prudent. True honor is thus directly – without possibility of compromise – contrary to the warped concept of ‘honor’ of original National-Socialism (Schutzstaffel more specifically) with its depraved motto “Meine Ehre heißt Treue” (“my honor means I am loyal”), for blind loyalty is a virtue of dogs not human beings. The real honor is when you're given unlawful orders (say, to shoot a civilian), you reject those orders, and under certain conditions you might be even morally obligated to shoot the person who issued them.

There is much in common between reasoning of Nazis and that of three-letter agencies, however. We came to use Nazis as scapegoat, so that we are the good guys, and they were the bad guys – but the truth is, they were just the bad guys who lost, whereas we are the bad guys who have won. Whether those other bad guys were worse than us still doesn't cancel the rot within our own governments. ‘Evil’ – that is, totalitarian state, characterized by pure power, being subject of which cannot be escaped whatsoever – is not one specific ideology, many tools can support its aims, and of course all ideologies used as such tools would declare to be for a benevolent (and usually utilitarian) cause. You may ask: but what about those who have fetish over aristocracy, those who openly don't care about wellness of society but only for that of its ‘greatest’ people? They're not going to achieve power grab in real life – they will remain Walter Mittiesque fantasists.

With all my respect and endorsement for Nietzsche's philosophical war against Christianity, I am not fond of his Zarathustra. **That which works for a recluse is not necessary that which works in society**. Both Nietzsche's own ideal, ‘superhuman’, and Kant's Categorical Imperative are intellectualized abstractions, but the former is much inferior to the latter for lack of being tested in reality.

Living in society is necessary for development of morals, and I only call morals that which was tested with respect to non-immediate consequences of action, hence why true morality simply cannot be coincident with social norms: preferences, fashion change faster than long-term impact of these things becomes known, and morality would be exactly concerned with long-term impact and thus will not cater to minute (utilitarian) interests that make society fragile. Sanity is not statistical: social norms themselves don't make morality, though morality still does require society in order to develop itself in first place. Reasoning in abstracto – like became trend from Socrates onwards, and which Nietzsche's own projects for the future exemplify most purely – does not result in robust judgment, and this is another error that Greek drama (which predates Socrates) cautions us against: exemplified by Sophocles' “Antigone”, where Creon uses such reasoning from abstractions (and from plebal memes about women's strength in relation to men) to rationalize and defend his edict, which results in disastrous consequences for himself and others. For Creon's abstract reasoning made him ignore what is due to others: one's reserved share they are entitled to receive from society (burial rites in regards to one's kin). As I indicated before, I consider this aspect – the existence of such share and the necessity to respect it – to be reflected in “suum cuique tribue” maxim of Roman (Byzantine) legal formula.

When one uses reified notions such as “human”, “ape”, “man”, “woman” to support conclusions that were not tested by his direct experience, he engages in abstract reasoning – even if he foregoes the Socratian rigor-enforcing protocol of establishing definitions and thus reflection on his depth of knowledge about subject matter (e.g. evolution and, in particular, speciation) or lack thereof. For there is difficulty to ascertain laws pertaining to living vs non-living matter, sentient actors vs non-sentient ones, those with causative potential vs those fully bound within world of causality. This difficulty results from it near impossible to control context and isolate effects on ‘object’ that is capable of effecting itself, adjusting itself, remembering itself, forming a mental model of ‘adversary’ and undertaking acts of mimicry, resistance and subversion. Nevermind that patterns can be “found” in random sequences, divine messages in noise, faces on the Moon (pareidolia) – and this attribution of general where there may be none is at core of applying abstract reasoning to real world. No problem is there with mathematical logic so long as it stays in confine of working with purely mathematical objects – but the moment correlation between a mathematical object and real-world object is made, the logic ceases to exhibit mathematical rigor, the initial impedance between model and real world escalating further with every derivation made. And if one lacking in scholarly learning engages in abstract reasoning, then one

adheres to memes – vulgar, primitive instructions uncritically absorbed from others.

Moral imperatives, I assert thus, can only be tested for veracity the hard way: by one having been through life's adversity, by having recognized what invites it and how it is overcome, and how not to escalate it further. Complementary learning is also from errors of others, but these lessons only sink in if one previously has tried hard to do things they are least capable of. If one only follows their talents, on the other hand, they will develop a lot of hubris that precludes such learning, so personal misfortune is more dependable in making one learn. One must discover his own hard limitations before he is eligible to judge others.

Greek tragedy was in some ways superior to certain later developments, particular to abstract ethical thought of Aristotle, nevermind to that of Plato – and both philosophers, notably, have quite erred in their perception of tragedy, as demonstrated by Ruth Scodel in her work "An Introduction to Greek Tragedy" (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2010) in the very first chapter, "Defining tragedy". I will skip over the fact that I am still bitter at misogyny of Ancient Greece, because Aristotle and Plato are not any better in that department. But we don't find in drama the naive promise that upholding morals will necessarily make one's life fortunate, though one indeed may avoid adding injury to oneself beyond what one is fated to experience. The other sources of misfortune, however, are *the greater plan of gods* (to make example of certain deeds, to associate them with misfortune, to which even the greatest mortals have to then submit – the part of Oedipus's misfortune that was prophesied), and *the machinations and violence of others* (such as Antigone suffers) – these two cannot be avoided.

It appears then, Aristotle's view on tragedy shall be seen as how *he* would prefer future tragedy to be written, but it does not form at all a valid or authoritative interpretation framework for works of Ancient Greece. I certainly won't endorse his project: the project of butchering tragedy and making new epic works in synthetic rather than organic manner. Aristotle's recommendation to portray noble characters as necessary fortunate and ignoble as unfortunate (rather than being harbingers of misfortune to community), I consider to be a backwards step from the honest instruction of Ancient Greece. For I rather appreciate the more consistent with real life insight of Greek tragedy that misfortune may haunt people of all dispositions. But most importantly, I think that false promises about morality do more damage to its credibility as a value – instead **we must consider why indeed it is possible that amoral people have better fate than moral**

ones, and spoiler: the amoral ones are not fortunate unconditionally but only under certain conditions.

Primary such conditions are: concealment, transfer of antifragility, opportunities passed on from family. Transfer of antifragility takes place whenever one has license to act granted by collective, without consequences to one granted said license, but with reproach towards anyone challenging this state of affairs because of collective trust in authority figures; it is the reverse of accountability – not just lack of accountability, but 'negative accountability': the one who challenges authority is called into question by others instead of said authority. Concealment is primary a prerogative of criminal world, though intelligence services sit at the intersection of the first two; the third is not a transgression in itself – just another factor for 'one can make more mistakes before he sinks'. That morality does not allow one to gain more advantage than is gained from those conditions, may lead one to abandon morality – and yet this desertion from morality can prove to be detrimental to one still. For a common trap is when one having deviated from the moral path, overlooks that misstep, and thinks he was 'failed by morality, having scarcely gained from it, and will gain by abandoning morality' – when the actual misfortune may be the result of (or otherwise escalated by) that misstep, or the very lack of resourcefulness that led to one abandoning moral action is what makes winning impossible. That is, **one's lack of resourcefulness caused both victory being impossible and moral action being impossible (or difficult to follow consistently), rather than morality being an obstacle to victory**. Furthermore, morality is not about personal gain, rather "not poisoning the well by one's own actions" would be a good metaphor – the metaphor also accounts that well may be, unfortunately, poisoned by someone else and that intervening to cleanse it or warn others may carry consequences, if malicious actors have servants that by force guard their treachery. There are definitely cases when one's transgressions led to him being blackmailed by the criminals, or where one derives their power and status from corrupt structure: where acting morally is explicitly punished by the system that receives its power through transfer of antifragility in first place. An example of such corrupt structure is literally every modern government – and by "corrupt", I did not mean money.

Notably, Western establishment has let movements that called for equity, affirmative action, etc. run rampant, because they did not meaningfully threaten its own source of power: transfer of antifragility. Indeed narratives of 'woke' and 'intersectional feminists' movements even inadvertently obscured this dynamic, while also erroneously narrowing down 'opportunities passed on from family' to a concept of group identity that historically held power, a "privileged" group.

Such narratives therefore also enabled anyone in position of however minuscule authority (but belonging to “oppressed” group identity) to co-opt “affirmative action” to abuse whoever falls within that authority and does not belong to “oppressed category”, just as they made it easier to abuse authority in other ways (for those not belonging to any “oppressed” group as well) – since there is no visibility for it in public discourse victims are unlikely to fight back. Even if victims choose to fight back, this authority may be backed by nepotism or professional ties and biases (a lecturing female professor having other professors by her side, in disputes with male students she scorns), while collective participation in opposing it is lacking or can be shut down by narratives ‘from the left’ – that is, co-opted from the left by those to whom it convenient, and having persuasive power due to public's habit and trickster's experience in bending narratives to their advantage.

Just like those movements overattribute injustice to originate from “privilege” (all oppression worthy of their note being ‘systemic’ one with a documented historical precedent – rather than system being merely a resource amongst many to indulge one's hubris and ignore ethical code), so too believers in conspiracy overattribute it to “shadow government” entities and the like. That is, they both operate some crude, reductionist model of reality, and by denying other sources of abuse are real they make them more difficult to challenge – even potentially make those immoral venues yet more advantageous. In reality, the most significant amount of injustice is inflicted in plain sight – though its recognition as such is suppressed by deceptive rhetoric – and by actually visible system of power, whose source is precisely ‘deference to authority’. And one doesn't address injustice by playing by the rules of the system – instead, *the rules by which system itself exists in first place* ought to be changed, and its narratives exposed for falsehoods they are. We must embrace “the road to hell is paved by good intentions” idiom – motives of “care”, “love”, etc. don't make actions non-harmful. That is, we need a decent epistemology of ‘harmful’ vs ‘beneficial’ to replace naive trust in good motives of authority.

The answer is exposure: one must incur meaningful losses to himself whenever his intervention ends up harming others. More than that, whenever one does something on behalf of others or to others, he must have this risk already – this is not retroactive punishment, but heuristic: he and others know that he won't escape taking downsides if he inflicts it upon others. Taleb calls it having **skin in the game**, it is introduced in his “Antifragile: …” book already, and is expanded upon in “Skin In The Game: Hidden Asymmetries in Daily Life”. Only he who takes risks must be respected by society, and never those who can benefit when others are harmed and walk away (bureaucrats and doctors are NOT to be

afforded any respect). Some people (soldiers, for instance) take risks for the sake of others (rather than for a chance of personal profit) – this Taleb calls *soul in the game*, which shall be afforded an even greater honor. Now as to how would widespread adoption of skin in the game tie into epistemology: it allows a path forward, acquisition of new knowledge, checked by the fact that mistakes are 1) become better known 2) disincentived, as interventionists now have to assess risk for themselves. **This then results in society where the impact of mistakes is contained at earliest opportunity, but the knowledge about what were mistakes propagates as far as possible**. Whereas in society where there are fewer instances of skin in the game, mistakes propagate (because those who do them keep their career paths), yet knowledge is not universally acquired or otherwise not enforced: the case of certain company withholding evidence from its own trials that its 'antipsychotic' drug has a high chance to cause diabetes, yet we were still told to "trust the science" when COVID-19 pandemic struck, and again when they rushed COVID-19 vaccine, foregoing protocol that mandates years of testing on volunteers, while vaccine also used new technology. In my experience in IT field, whenever we deviated to protocol to speed up things (even by doing as little as going faster alongside it and doing our parts in parallel), damage has resulted, so the takeaway is: you can NEVER speed up protocols. All rules that pertain to people's safety are written in blood and must be followed dogmatically. No exceptions; no exceptions whatsoever.

Skin in the game is thus, properly understood, not "shared fragility" like some may assume upon first exposure to concept, but reduction of systemic fragility. By embracing skin in the game, society can avert its own collapse, evidence of which would only be available too late otherwise. Correct thus was Cicero in his "De Officiis" ("On Duties"), when he stated that expedient course of action must not contradict morally correct, for the effects of one's actions do come around, even if the visibility of this fact is delayed (and the greater the scale the later it will become apparent): if not to oneself, then to one's family, if not to one's family, then to one's tribe, if not to one's tribe, than to the whole nation, and once nation is perished (even if subjugated by another nation) his continuation ceases – in the future, he is necessary undone. Now a noble man necessarily recognizes this – and thus to him expedient and morally correct are one and the same course of action – whereas an ignoble, mundane, pleb does not, and this in absence of legitimized structure of 'aristocracy' already lays down the distinction between noble and mundane men. Thus when in Ancient Greek ethos (such as evident in Greek tragedy) it was established that rotten deeds must be avenged, it must be

understood that vengeance is inevitable, but the scale on which it will be inflicted grows the longer it is unavenged.

Now, as for why I really appreciate Cicero more than I do any other philosopher, beside him having had children and a politically active life. When doing exposition of works of other philosophers, Cicero always complements (compares and contrasts) their views by his own experience, managing to maintain both the authority of philosophy yet avoid landing in a premature agreement – a skill nigh-impossible to reproduce. This is a really distinguished approach – very positively so – because it avoids the error I will talk of next.

There is a peculiar error that high reputation of Aristotle's reasoning – and occasional success of theory producing practical results – can inspire people to commit, if this reasoning is not accompanied by rigor and its fruits are not tested against the real world. When conclusions reached logically go unchecked by direct experience, there results an error that I will call 'mimidoshima fallacy' – even if one started from verified premises. Mimidoshima is a Japanese term for a woman (usually adolescent) who has "matured by ears": has no experience of sex yet but picked a lot of conceptions about it that she is confident parading before peers. The construction of unobserved abstract paradox purported to apply to reality – a thought experiment such as Buridan's ass paradox – is an example of mimidoshima fallacy. Creon's argument that "the brother that waged aggressive war on another does not deserve the burial rites *because* (note the abstract inference) wicked are not entitled to the same honors as those of noble character" is an example of mimidoshima fallacy. Nietzsche's superhuman and the entire doctrine of Social-Darwinism are an example of mimidoshima fallacy.

Kant's "Categorical Imperative", though a heavy abstraction, is NOT a mimidoshima fallacy. Kant constructed a meta-theory for what is already observed to be moral imperatives, and how they may reliably be distinguished them from imperatives that may have compulsive nature but shall not be mistaken to be moral nonetheless. This is a distinction one with innate sense of honor knows intuitively – even though one who is not a philosopher might not be able to construct a rigorous explanation in words why he knows so. I consider Kant's framework to still limit epistemology of morals too stringently, but it is consistent at distinguishing moral duty from those maxims that arose as copium: the subcategory of *immoral* maxims that would pertain to wanting to subject everyone to what one is able to tolerate or have been forced to tolerate in the past. For no matter how fiercely one may publicly defend these as moral obligations, in their heart they know the difference, and thus in privacy of their mind are

tormented by their conscience. Thus one can interpret Categorical Imperative not as a method to invention but as a method to discernment – to vet maxims: to test which of maxims he is wont to impose on himself and others have the making of a moral maxim, and which constitute compulsions provoked by prior injury. This way Categorical Imperative can be applied via negativa, feeding to its razor the fruits of experience that were initially processed in bottom-up manner (starting not from the end of abstraction but from attention to details). The resulting moral epistemology is therefore grounded in experience instead of in abstraction, despite certain rules being imposed as a vetting procedure (to help distinguish between cope and real lessons from adversity).

Mimidoshima fallacy is the construction of ideal objects that were not experienced – and might be impossible to experience – yet purported to exist or to be compelling to pursue in real life, with intention to force them as values or practices on others (to subject others to authority or impact of said vane ideas). The ideal objects so constructed are to be called **causal abstractions**. Proper science, though entertaining new ideas that theory predicts, necessarily tests them in an experiment before calling them real; when industry utilizes confirmed theories to design new objects (cars, shoes, whatever) they still know all too well the value of necessary testing, of producing physical prototypes and pre-release (or limited edition) versions of these objects before pushing them to mass production. Even for scientific theories that purport to be foundational rather than applied sciences, these tests are sometimes very expensive (like the ones performed on Large Hadron Collider), which might leave plebal specimen puzzled as to their significance.

Scientism, on the other hand, does not exhibit same rigor – scientism being in this context an umbrella term for corrupt science, politics masquerading as science, and reckless journalism about what science yet begins to investigate (and may reject later). And by corrupt science I don't mean the case of individual scientist making illegal profit (although that does happen as well), but rather the dependent position into which academia is forced by grants – which shape its pursuit around the need to present results that capitalism wants and conceal those it doesn't want to acknowledge, for fear of losing funding. You experience grooming to chase *desirable* rather than truthful results when making university projects for your degree already – even if you don't intend to stay in academia. Such positivist framework (“do what businesses will find profitable!”) fosters willful ignorance of fragility as a collective modus operandi: appease businesses or politicians now, investigate damage later (or never). Only idealist “abstract mathematics master race” types can resist this indoctrination, an observation that

can be framed as a paradox of 'true abstraction (constrained to ideal world of mathematics) being good but abstraction that claims to be a model of reality can be very, very bad – that is, cause a lot of damage'. Claims that are accepted on the basis of how mathematical model performs (rather than real-life tests), or because of values that are fashioned on a student campus – are but two examples of what is almost guaranteed to bring a lot of harm to society. But don't overlook how pursuit of capitalist's profit and political success is always recklessly ignorant about long-term damage (fragility) or even intentionally creates products meant to break soon – even going as far as to build expiration or pay-for-each-use into digital products that do not (cannot) have natural scarcity (a practice that is known as Defective-By-Design, or Digital Restrictions Management). Businesses will exploit fragility everywhere it is profitable to them: social networks have highly tuned recommendation algorithms intending to make you frustrated, as frustrated people spend more time on social networks. As Anton LaVey noted in "The Devil's Notebook", which was published before social networks existed, *good news don't sell* – and he did provide a concrete example of a newspaper that went out of business because it decided to publish only good news for a change. People need to feel miserable in order to be **obligatory consumers** – we are not that way by Nature.

We are thus looking for a damage-limiting ethos that is compatible with technological progress: **through skin in the game we can finally establish, on collective level, practical epistemology other than whether someone survives or dies**. For personal experience is not enough (will elaborate more upon this in part II) – we want the knowledge gained to propagate as far as possible while containing the damage to as minor scale as possible. It is this development that makes a way forward instead of backward actually possible – the backward way would be reverting our societies to the state of mere survival rather than prosperity. So-called "traditional values" would represent the way backward, and one that requires wars and expansionism at that. I find it ironic that Western apologists of those values tend to be also apologists of peace (*peace-shaggers*, I call them – prominent examples being neoreactionaries, or NRx), but they really should look onto Russia as the real-life example of how society keeping to Christian values demands existence of 'external enemy' and expansionist war in order to sustain itself. Contrast also secular Iran before Iranian revolution, and Iran and its satellite states after arrival of ayatollahs – what a rapid descent from peaceful and prospering civilization into poverty and bloodthirst! The truth is that such societies (built upon Christianity and Islam) suck at self-sustenance, at utilizing what they have: they are so inefficient that resources can only come from new

territories, or lack of inefficiency can only be detracted from through “existential” conquests – through raping land of others, “for how dare they live better or even aspire to a better life”.

It would indeed be better to rebuild all international affairs on moral ground: wars will become harder to justify, it will be harder to launder money through extending wars (like Democrats did with their *half-assed* support for Ukraine, during Biden's administration in US), and a lot of money can be saved on propaganda, for propaganda machines of different countries won't be able to take contest this far if geopolitics followed clear-defined rules: such as you are plain not allowed to extend into territory of others in 21th Century for fuck's sake. The ancient instruction that Greek orator Isocrates wrote to Nicocles after the latter became king of Salamis (Cyprus) – “deal with weaker states as you would expect stronger states to deal with you”[20] – is the appropriate meta-principle for inter-state affairs. US being superpower and conducting extra-territorial war campaigns has made the world very unstable – very fragile, and it is at present indeed difficult to shake some sense into proponents of Russian invasion of Ukraine when their argument is “US didn't mind its own business in Serbia and Iraq so why should we”. Alas, US was indeed morally bankrupt and did those things, and so paved precedent for waging aggressive war on regimes that you don't like. And the supposed arbiter of international affairs, United Nations is a stillborn organization just like League of Nations preceding it: exactly because it has countries whose concerns are privileged – and these very few countries that were supposed to be “permanent guardians of world's security” are the ones now destabilizing it, and threatening to do more to destabilize it (China has not taken Taiwan at the time of this writing, but its intent on it is to be taken seriously). Now, in regards to attempts to force a fragile peace deal – read surrender – on Ukraine: you don't give up liberty in order to save lives, you give up life to protect liberty. Life without liberty is worse than no life at all. Justice, therefore, comes before peace, and no peace is acceptable without justice.

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[20] This and another instruction of Isocrates, occurring in “To Demonicus”: “conduct yourself toward your parents as you would have your children conduct themselves toward you” are often misportrayed as having anticipated the Golden Rule, yet should not, in my opinion, be interpreted in such manner, for these particular instructions are much more robust when being applied to these specific circumstances, than other maxims that can be logically deduced from Golden Rule for different circumstances, including on treatment of children by parents rather than vice versa. On my criticism of Golden Rule, see next part (How moral convictions get adopted, tested and their relation to our agency).

Now as to false solutions to the problem of instructing others. As I indicated before, **memes are carriers of plebal weltanschauung** – they are diametric opposites of Greek tragedy. An example of pre-Internet era meme is 'Nietzsche and the horse' fabricated story, debunked by Anacleto Verrecchia in his essay "La catastrofe di Nietzsche a Torino" ("Nietzsche's breakdown in Turin"[21]). The only thing we know about the incident is that Nietzsche caused some kind of public disturbance – allegations as to specifics were made later, perhaps to diminish the persuasiveness of Nietzsche's philosophy. The other popular belief that the cause of Nietzsche's madness has been syphilis is also being contested nowadays: the article "What was the cause of Nietzsche's dementia?" by Leonard Sax investigates a plausible cause of Nietzsche's illness, and provides evidence for rejecting the hypothesis that it was syphilis.

Memes tend to enforce values rather than communicate knowledge, but the kind of values so promoted tend to be vulgar and also subject to mutation (e.g. Pepe The Frog). For memes don't have power by themselves, but only in so far community endorses them, and the kind of people who endorse them are ones looking exclusively for simple, dogmatic, solve-it-all answers. The potential of subterfuge of ends – which subterfuge is a by-product of this reductionist mentality – presents a relevant hazard to those who would want to harness their power to instruct those who can't otherwise be instructed. Meme is a virus with its own life and is loyal to no one. Meme-carried values are thus subject to "Chinese whispers" distortion and cannot be trusted to keep the flock going in the direction "masters" want – in fact flock goes where it is convenient to them, and memes take hold only when they coincided with something that at least occasionally was convenient and thus resonates with the plebal ways. The reductionist 'truth' that meme carries appeals to their past experience, exaggerates it, and suppresses vigilance towards (or otherwise undermines value-wise) all conflicting experience. And the flock really wants to hear: "do it like you did back then and it will carry you across all situations" – it is really this dumb. Meanwhile, genuine practical instructions are correct only within certain context – very few things in life are generalizable without fault.

There exists a more intricate form of grooming – university education system – which is to produce individuals who maintain elaborate artificial narratives to themselves that persist in light of all contradicting evidence. However, the result of narratives contradicting reality is personal fragility – these individuals

[21] The English translation of Verrecchia's essay can be found as part of "Nietzsche in Italy" published by Stanford University Press, 1988, edited by Thomas J. Harrison, pp105-12

only survive by leeching antifragility from society, that is, amorally. Outside of grants to earn a living, they are carried through Orwellian 'doublethink' – having learned that what they say to others (to maintain status and source of income) may differ from what they orient themselves to when they are personally navigating life. It must be said then, that without *personal* scholarship – meticulous study of primary sources – "trust in science" results in mere indoctrination, and the need for personal survival while maintaining doctrine outwards, in hypocrisy and gambling on life of others.

Another fierce contender for grooming in falsehoods is organized religion – it has a whole part of this treatise dedicated to it, for it is remarkable in both making losers as well as fostering deadly conflicts and prejudice. Those who take religion literally, rot on the bottom of social food chain, and this shall not be considered an excuse to not take it literally, for such frivolous interpretations are what enables cancer strains to propagate. It also would not be consistent to charge scientism with hypocrisy yet back up ceremonial religious practices while not following the religious ethical doctrines to the letter, as the reason to resort to personal exploits in preference to established norms in both cases is linked to personal survival. You got it right: neither science nor religion are adequate guide to life, but rather each of us has to attain the answers the hard, personal way of engaging in life and overcoming adversity. How do to so is explained in further parts of this treatise.

Succinctly, there is an issue of what I call "false twins" – impostors of proper guidance – with the following being merely examples:

- **false twin of morality = social norms**
- **false twin of defiance = identity of a "rebel", or being a contrarian**
- **false twin of glory = popular fame**
- **false twin of wisdom = cleverness, wordsmithery**

In present treatise I thus attempt to distinguish between proper guidance – the source of which is life itself – and these impostors. Yes, I am indeed talking about becoming your own man – or woman – not subscribing to someone's premade values, though not dismissing intellectual legacy of humanity. I expect few readers will stay the course through, whether because of its complexity, or because they disagree with my assessment of political struggles that transpired, or because

they mistake me for a covert apologist of some extreme ideology despite all my statements to the contrary. What the latter people in particular must understand is that I am more than willing to pay the price of being alone – and they fear it so intensely, they can't possibly phantom one would stick up with this choice for life. I don't have tendency to copy other people values in order to belong somewhere – that defect of "monkey see monkey do" is what people for whom loneliness is terrifying exhibit. Two Slavic proverbs shaped my weltanschauung from early life: "Ты лучше голодай, чем что попало ешь, и лучше будь один, чем вместе с кем попало" and "Не страшно, если ты один, страшно – если ты ноль"[22].

There are also no hidden meanings in my work to decipher: I always prefer directness over between-the-lines speech. If due attention is paid to what I have factually written, if no projections are read into my words, then the incompatibility of extreme narratives with my principles shall become apparent. That being said, the subject matter is genuinely difficult and hard to grasp, so if you don't get some theses of mine, don't try to fill in the blanks with what you've seen elsewhere – just leave them for later.

II. How moral convictions get adopted, tested and their relation to our agency

This theory of morality is getting complex, so it shall be demonstrated **why it can't be simple**. A common reductionist attempt is to base morality on compassion or love, which trivializes moral questions by enabling many wrong answers to be eagerly accepted. Yet an ignorant person acting out of love brings much harm to those subjected to such love. Quite unfortunately, such harm is not easily proven, else it would have been mostly gone from this world – instead it endures, since the person doing harm does not share the setbacks they inflict on another out of their pretentious motive of love (or compassion). Furthermore, they get sufficient validation from their peers, organized religion and from other systems of power – for being useful idiots – since parasites need victims that will always sacrifice their interests for the profit of those in charge, under the pretext that such sacrifice is somehow a virtue. Interventionists also have vested interest in promoting "helping people against their will" as a virtue, so as to stay entrenched in their expert position, listened to instead of scorned. A self-reliant person who

[22] Respectively, "You better hunger than be indiscriminate in eating, and better be alone than with people you chose for lack of better options" and "It is not disastrous to be one (alone), it is disastrous to be a zero".

understands why everyone ought to make their mistakes and learn from it, is the bane of their existence.

For what is better, build man a fire, or teach him how to do it, so he could rebuild it as many times as he wishes? Some parents believe it the former, so they try to control every single aspect of their child's life, lest some even minor trouble happen to them, which pattern usually continues well into that child's adulthood. This style of parenting is called helicoptering, and in modern parlance typically is rationalized away as “parents care too much”. This kind of rationalization might obscure the true nature of the parenting style – parents may instead be anxious, greedy for attention and approval from child and their peers – so I will instead opt for a via negativa definition: it is a deprivation of learning (of acquiring practical wisdom) and of agency. This is a more accurate definition, whereas interpreting parents' actions as love whitewashes the resulting harm. I have also prepared a cautionary tale on this subject.

The tale is somewhat an urban legend, for I've met this person only online. He was looking for an easy way to move abroad, to ‘learn the ropes’ (as he himself have put it) from the one who did that, but was unwilling to take any requisite steps themselves. The conversation devolved into discussing his upbringing, as he started to rationalize around his laziness. In the very beginning of that exchange, I replied that his past can't be helped, either he solves his adult problems or not. Yet all my advice was met with more excuses, and I finally resigned to agree his situation may be unsalvageable after all. A red sign was his parents never moved out of matrilineal grandma house, never owned a car, and were apparently social losers or outcasts. Throughout that person's growing up – as the hapless conversant claimed – his parents were saving to buy the child a house to live separately, while also controlling every single aspect of their life, denying him initiative and providing him with everything so he can focus on learning, getting higher education and such. I've gathered that his parents' idea was to provide their child with all things their own parents have not provided them with. Naturally, this person never learned self-sufficiency, and on top of that, never completed that higher education anyway, while dreaming of leaving the country that he hated. As for apartment, he took money instead and blew it pursuing all kind of distractions to patch up the emptiness of his life. So much, for helicopter parenting.

The logic of those parents exhibits the “I should have done” kind of reasoning I already declared as fallacious. They were going through uncharted territory because charted territory was bad, with expectations that uncharted territory

will be necessarily better. The parents did things based on a reasoning that they themselves were parented bad, but their contrarian way just produced another kind of parenting that is also bad, while perhaps they still unconsciously copied the bad parts of their own parenting as well, those that evaded reflection, as well as themselves being but role models for misery, the bottoms of competitive society, whose only "virtue" at work was loyalty to the company and readiness to do overtime. Neither the heuristic nor the motive of love proved to be sufficient to avoid harm. Hence why I state that love doesn't have virtue by itself – it does not lead to morally acceptable results.

The argument also holds against the Golden Rule ("do unto others as you would have them do unto you"), for it would justify the logic those parents followed. One's preferences may differ from those of others, so you have no right to decide what would be good for others based on your own preferences. Negative restatement of Golden Rule ("don't treat others the way you don't want to be treated") wouldn't fix above example either. You do not know that which you never experienced does harm, unless such knowledge is publicly available and you do not dismiss it. For example, while awareness of the harm helicopter parenting does is on the rise, many still find a way to justify it, and control freaks won't relinquish control anyway even if the battle cry against helicoptering did became unanimous.

Astute readers who got my concept "we don't know much about causality" from section prior will, of course, interject that parents being losers might have played bigger role than helicopter parenting in that person's mishaps. I don't deny this may have been most significant. However, this hypothesis also debunks Golden Rule: parents being losers limited their capacity to do good. For someone incapable the moral decision is to stay away while actually capable people attend to the solution. Golden Rule does not encapsulate this bit of knowledge. In the case considered, for those parents, prodding their child to solve their own problems from time to time, and greatly limiting intervention to the child's life, could have been the only good thing they could do. That is, encouraging child's agency and solving challenges through his own effort, only intervening in so far as to prevent him from ruining himself, such as for example from mingling with a bad company: drug addicts, criminals, and the like.

Both versions of Golden Rule are incompatible with criminal justice. By appealing to Golden Rule, a guard can justify decision to take pity on a convict and release him a morally justified conduct – notably, Kant rejected it for this reason and explicitly declared his Categorical Imperative to not be compatible with it. It

also doesn't matter that not every guard would want to be treated that way, what matters is the one who would want to be pitied would feel justified in breaking a law and release a convict he was entrusted to keep imprisoned, having acted out of the Golden Rule exactly. Furthermore, if some guard would want for law to be maintained so strongly he would not have sought to release himself if he ever was in convict's position, than this respect for law – a sense of moral duty – comes once again from where? Not from Golden Rule, but from respect for social order and the necessity of upholding obligations to sustain it, in which case, ergo, Golden Rule is not the meta behind morality.

Yet the Categorical Imperative also can't generate instruction in a priori manner to the situation of parenting I described (as in answer, how to parent and how not to) – necessary epistemic truth must be attained first from real world. Regardless whether such things are consistent with Kant's intentions or contradict them, I stay by my assertion that empirical knowledge shall be allowed to inform both individual and society of which actions to hold as morally acceptable or otherwise – so that harmful practices are not pursued, not reproduced. Thus, no cookie-cutter for morality, no formula (whether simple or complex) to derive all morality from – but, a doctrine such as the Categorical Imperative can inspire one with a via negativa criteria for testing maxims: if maxim fails the criteria, then it is definitely not a moral one; but reality still can refute a maxim that passed the criteria. Note that neither Golden Rule nor motive of compassion would be good vetting principles even via negativa – because they don't account for the situation of keeping the criminal imprisoned for the sake of social order (and preventing him from further offending) but instead only care for personal suffering – but Categorical Imperative is a good vetting principle if practical reason is allowed to be informed by experience. It is for this same reason – the need for real world epistemology – that instructions of Isocrates that “children treat their parents as they would want to be treated by their own children” and his instruction to king “deal with weaker states as you would want stronger states to deal with you” are valuable even though the generic Golden Rule is not: where one will do good and where one will do harm is harder to mispredict in those particular scenarios that Isocrates addressed. But these instructions are NOT generalizable to cases where epistemology is necessary and is hard, such as parents trying to benefit their own children, for example. For as I shown, parents can screw up children with good intentions, if they are forced to tread uncharted territory by having had their own parents treat them like shit. Therefore only specific guidelines proposed by Isocrates hold, but the Golden Rule and all other abstract formulas do not. We have to ditch shortcuts – ditch the entire approach to moral knowledge as finding

its source in metaethical rules *alone* – and instead consider how genuine moral knowledge can be obtained from life itself, and then preserved and passed along. Only through knowledge of the real world can we discern what is harmful and what is not – lack of said knowledge, in any sphere of life even be we masters in every other, is NOT going to be compensated by rules that ping back to our own preferences.

The ultimate judge of ideas is survival – what enabled one to thrive under toughest conditions, is correct. And that which didn't, is an even more certain wrong. Knowledge *confirmation* is achieved most robustly through what is called "learning from adversity", provided – and now this is one big "if" – one survives in the first place. It does so by separating ideas that worked (enabled survival) from those that didn't (haven't lead to escaping a dangerous situation, or placed one in such situation to begin with). In other words, it is a razor – it does not produce ideas per se, it tests and selects ideas, distinguishes working from non-working (wise from unwise), and the result of such selection, is insight. Such insight may be of intuitive kind: wordless eclaircissment between concepts that are similar when described in words but empirically very different. **One must also distinguish ideas that enabled survival from ideas adopted following survival** – including what one bases identity on and so is able to carry themselves forward, to live on past unfortunate event. For ideas adopted after, weren't part of the test, thus while they may be useful and indeed necessary to keep going, they may be later revealed to be imperfect or fallacious. I do not advocate rejecting them, however, they are just a third category – neither proven nor disproven – something that will be subject to a future test; all that I call for is not to accidentally place them into category of proven ideas. Their merit instead is that they provide faith, a sense of purpose. One shall reject impression that survival makes someone so bright all they do is wise from there on: while it does make clear which concerns are relevant in practice (indeed adversity is the most reliable guide to relevance), yet in regards to how they are addressed, it merely cleaves previously adopted convictions.

This also thus solves the dilemma of whether or not one gets "stronger" from adversity that didn't kill them: they may have gotten *a bit* wiser, which might or might not offset the (negative) physical consequences. And only then a bit wiser, if they don't turn a blind eye to what they glimpsed of reality in survival situation, as if it was only a thing relevant to the past.

But if survival merely tests ideas, and survival is predicated on some of those being actually workable, those ideas better be drawn from some veritable source.

Not only ideas, but our natural inclinations also can be put to test, and be more useful, than some of the ideas circulating around. Yet with social adversity, for example, it is hard to compete with people who are “good at the game” by trying things one has not done before. From my observations, human mind does appear to be wired to undertake experimentation, to pursue novelty, and so does not fall back on “coping” patterns until it fails with a new approach first. But while such tinkering might lead to solutions eventually – when one can run trial-and-error many times – one doesn't have this opportunity in survival situations. Such approach is therefore for quiet times not high-stakes scenarios, that is, tinkering is best used far away from survival razor.

Thus more knowledge is needed than what one might have managed to ascertain through their own experience. This means looking for knowledge that was already tested by others, and to that end must distinguish ideas that are merely around from those that enabled either society as a whole, or individuals, to survive. Such distinction can be drawn via negativa also. To be avoided are those ideas that caused individuals NOT to survive, or to damage themselves considerably, or enable others to take advantage of them. One of the more robust ways to do so is to use “negative role model” technique, detailed in previous section. Success is harder to scrutinize than failure, as it might have to do with opportunities others not have, whether accomplished or born into, such as having wealth, and yes they may also play a role in survival situation. One won't get by with only ideas to exclude, though. The key to survival rests in combining the two ways: **ideas from “via negativa” guard us against hastening our demise, but it is among methods to success that the way out of the situation will be**. A tragic caveat: it is survival razor that will distinguish which of ‘methods of success’ will work in particular situation, and which will not. Hence the asymmetry in regards to public policies: most public policies shall be rather via negativa (solutions unlikely to add fragility must be preferred when working on great scale), but in one's personal life one won't get far with only via negativa – embracing moral instructions can prevent one's ruin but won't guarantee one's success, a way to success that doesn't contradict moral objectives is still necessary to discover.

It would have been better if all bad ideas culled themselves rather than floated around, but **this can only be solved on collective level, via introducing skin in the game** into all transactions between people: one whose mistakes can affect others shall also pay some price. A society permuted by this principle would be continuously exposing that which doesn't work, making easier to work out what does for that would stick around. But we don't have such societies yet, so for now one can consider most reliable those ideas and traditions which passed – and

were accepted – into times quite different from where they are originated, such as Roman legal tradition and works of authors like Cicero, Plutarch, Isocrates and others. I would have also recommended Thales, Anaxagoras and astronomer Aristarchus, were their written works to survive (you can still read third-party accounts of them); whereas I am ambivalent towards Aristotle and negative towards Plato.

Otherwise, moral epistemology is currently *hard* – stemming from our societies not built upon skin in the game (yet). At the same time, we are bombarded with false knowledge, by those who have vested interest in exploiting us, and by those who don't know any better. I will therefore investigate below some defense techniques against these fragilizing winds of social interaction – against learning self-deception and servility as result of being criticized, ostracized and shamed by others. This art of self-defense is instrumental in not abandoning moral knowledge attained the hard way.

By itself already, conflict of values with social environment can push one towards **self-reflection**. This may also happen as the result of disillusionment with old values, which disillusionment would be provoked by a new environment which has different ones, but is not necessary an adversary. Self-reflection may even turn into an unhealthy habit if enough adversity is met and one does not, at the time, have sufficient knowledge to swiftly overcome it (adversity) or is generally unsuccessful, even in matters not to do with seeking companionship (e.g. failing in education). One way or another, one learns that values can be different. In its most primitive form (typically during early/mid teenage years), the conflict is mirrored inside, and produces a split between persona that parents raised and other adult authorities helped form, and the adversary figure, who can be inner critic, or who can be heretic or rebel (who looks at persona with contempt for their servility). Usually it is the latter (adversary) evaluating the former (persona), seeking to prove its incompetence. Such reflection is therefore value-laden, involves internal animosity, dialectics between higher/lower values, dialectics between responsibility and docility, and so on. Whether or not people, on average, tend to get stuck on this level, I won't bother speculate – instead I will guide reader to discern between the better kinds of self-reflection, their strengths and limitations. When contrasted by these refined ways of self-reflection proper, the self-critical, dissociating kind will be immediately recognized for atavism it is.

An important limitation shared by all kinds of self-reflection is they can't substitute knowing one's way around real world. The lack of practical knowledge can put one at severe disadvantage that cannot be compensated by even exceptional levels

of self-awareness. That is, self-awareness does not present an ultimate answer to all questions, although it does answer some important ones. Likewise, shortage of practical knowledge also puts one in situations where they can be harmed or overpowered by others, become dependent on them. Thus the primary pursuit of a young person should be that of (social) mobility – gaining ability to quit one environment and move to another, repetitively if need be – for being tethered to wrong people is especially fragilizing. And, after all, self-reflection is not as easy a craft as it might seem to dilettantes.

The most robust form of self-reflection is learning one's own patterns, **the manner in which one does things**. It is most robust, because it does not involve any attributions of causality – those attributions are unreliable and fragile in general. One simply observes oneself, takes mental notes as to how they approach tasks (not which tasks, but how). Importantly: not what they as a person are, for that does make presumptions about causality by abstracting away imagined "qualities" from only select events, and in process of doing so overlooks evidence that contradicts this established conclusion, and hides such evidence going forward. So even the most robust is not robust enough, for those new to it (a tragic caveat). Yet used with enough care, this kind of reflection can enable a sort of clairvoyance, without superstition, within a time horizon. This is hinted in Selanna's story (the example of implementing Eclipsement) – she is able to estimate whether or not she will go to another country to meet her favorite athlete celebrity and role model, before feelings expire. Suppose she knows that past affections did not last long, and traveling to that country is a huge leap from her current travelling experience: difficult visa requirements, remoteness (one must endure a long flight to get there), vastly different cultural norms she would have hard time adjusting to, unlikelihood to actually converse with the person, no knowledge of that person's native language (and that person not necessarily knows English well) etc. Add to that no other purpose for going to that country, and the picture is complete. Too many sacrifices to be made for a relationship not likely to endure, so reason will refuse to help overcome these hurdles: it is more meaningful to seek a different end and a different, more compatible, person.

Self-remembrance is also a form of self-reflection proper that is reliable: **remembering decisions that were made specifically consciously**. Just like previous kind of self-reflection, it remembers facts: I factually reached a conclusion, or I know for certain I reached it a certain way (not inferred that I reached it a certain way, but rather I remember for sure how I reached it). So if the results I got were not good or not good enough, and I remember my conscious judgment that led to said results, then I need to refine my judgment. What was there I overlooked that

was in this case relevant, and how I reconcile it with things that may be relevant in a different scenario, so a fix to my judgment doesn't cause regressions in other situations? Note that the adjustments will not be as robust as recollection itself, but the part where we deal with recollections about out conscious judgment, we are dealing with the facts still. The scope of decisions which can be analyzed this way is limited only to those reached consciously. Even for a sage there would be blind spots in their past, where they were not yet living consciously, or specific decisions made on an impulse or under pressure of circumstances, for which this technique is then not applicable. Although taking note of the action itself that led to undesirable consequences would still be correct – it is assertions about motives of one's actions that are to be discarded, when those motives did not originate from conscious.

The reliable is now behind us – a rather difficult to get right form of self-reflection is **apophatic self-reflection**. It is, however, a valuable self-defense technique (as in mental self-defense rather than physical), as it directed at countering influence that came from outside consciousness: groupthink, propaganda, indoctrination, emotionally-derived biases, etc. It involves critical investigation of assumptions held with provision to eliminate all those not supported by direct (experiential) evidence, or were over-generalized, or may have originated from other people agenda. To sidestep the problem of unreliable causality, the focus shall be on what purpose they serve for oneself now, if there is anything to lose by dropping rogue assumptions whose origin is unknown, possibly treacherous. Another aspect to track is whether they can be reinforced – how, by whom – and how this continued influence can be counteracted. Furthermore, you shall observe whether dropping them produces changes sought, for you may have confused nature for nurture, and are fighting against yourself an unwinnable battle, or at least one not winnable through any kind of self-reflection, but one that requires gaining new skills and more knowledge of reality. Apophatic self-reflection shall be treated as ongoing (and limited) epistemology, you eliminate factors, you observe effects of that elimination. What can't be achieved by elimination, can't be achieved through this method. The hunt may be initiated by desire to free oneself from others' influence, but confusing that intent for proven causality, can backfire because you might start fighting things that are not there, without affect on things that are.

The last – also not entirely precise form of self-reflection – is **symbolic deciphering**, which is about recognizing the meaning of symbols in the dreams or in one's mind to peek into what is held to be relevant but otherwise hidden from conscious mind. Say, my association with ‘a candle’ is intense sexual intercourse, the candle “bearing witness” to the act. I spoke of detecting grief in chronic phase before in

this guide: wanting to get a heart tattoo is my personal pointer to “unfinished business” with the most recent person of interest – means I didn't resolve it and move on but merely gave up and pretended, to myself, to have moved on. Though my dreams nowadays rarely employ symbols and convey their meaning rather directly, so this I use on thoughts that occur without much explanation. The meaning of symbols is established through recognizing context in which they occur: for example, the meaning of heart tattoo for myself (remember about personal significance) was established from limerence passing into grief, then back into limerence – during grief period I wanted to get a heart tattoo but was cautious not to actually pursue it (yes, I can have a want but not pursue it – like any truly rational animal). So next time same thoughts occur it is clear what is hiding from consciousness. While meaning of symbols may vary from person to person, some symbols may still have conventional meaning that is shared by collective – one's reaction then can be indicative, whether you agree with interpretation based on universal or cultural meaning, or you don't relate to it at all.

I admit those descriptions were harder to proof against error than I expected – and I already expected that to be a challenge. So, for reader, the final (wordless) eclaircissment about these self-reflection variants will have to be achieved through practice.

Proper self-reflection – all the four types delineated above, taken together – enables self-honesty, understanding yourself as you are instead of through distorted lenses of common people. For the common people are prone to rationalization: they will frequently ascribe “positive” or “negative” motives – or indeed arbitrary motives – to actions that (motives) differ from your real ones. Most importantly, modern society does ascribe positive meaning and attributes positive motives to many actions that do damage to other people and even to society itself. Actions a self-honest and moral person would feel guilty or ashamed of, and therefore disregard being embraced by one's peers or praised by “authorities” for such dishonorable actions.

Now as for **how to navigate social adversity**, or rather social environment in which adversity may or may not occur. Can we presume knowledge of others and especially apply reflection with the same precision one can achieve towards oneself? No, because ultimately we can't know their intentions, and can acquire only superficial knowledge of their preferences. We can, however, observe patterns – the manner in which they get things done – and we may try to learn what they are incapable of doing. But what one can't presume is how their goals

correlate (or not) with their abilities, can't derive their goals from the way we ourselves would derive had we the same skills and patterns and substitute our lack of direct insight into their mind with such speculative assumptions. They may be different from us in some aspects, like us in others. Thus, in high stake scenarios, the defender shall seek to physically limit the capacity of another to do harm – to limit options available to them, down to options known to the defender, and all of them successfully defensible against. This is active form of defense, but there is also a passive one – limiting others' knowledge about oneself to render them incapable of striking where it matters.

This defense is unselective – it does not require to recognize allegiances and adversaries, indeed it shall not make assumptions, for such can change: former friends may be compelled to provide intelligence, extorted, turned, so on. It uses the propensity of others to make assumptions and rationalize our behavior – all that one needs, is not to work against those assumptions but let them be. Only rumors that harm reputation shall be challenged, all that is incorrect about us but doesn't make us fragile, shall proliferate and will form our natural defense. It is only convenient that challenging assumptions others make is harder, than letting them remain. “To thyself be true” shall become one's motto, now all that remains to identify is when one has urge to break it and prevent that. I already indicated that at the end of “Limerence in society” chapter – we need less understanding from others when we are successful at our own goals. It works also in reverse: the more we struggle, the more we begin to concern ourselves with recognition – the more fragile we get. Finding oneself in unsupportitive environment, one must find a way to personal success whatever it takes, to suppress this vulnerability. When that is taken care of, however, one has enabled an opportunity to use stereotyped thoughts and fallacious assumptions of other people against them, “Art of War” style. Another merit of this defense is that it lets one keep friends, instead of making adversaries out of arbitrary people – you don't target other people intentionally, you just eliminate your own fragility, and let allegiances be discovered with time.

Summarized, the defense mentioned in previous paragraph is “**other people's ignorance can be converted to your effective strength**”. And should be so converted, in preference to attempts to obnoxiously show one's true self to people who don't care to know it.

Dire situations may require one to go beyond “innocent” defenses and employ **lying to adversary**, at least if one really wants to survive. These situations are where there are reasonable expectations one can be harmed by malice or

incompetence. While not all people are capable of telling so-called ‘white lies’, fortunately, everyone is capable of lying out of self-preservation, by omission or otherwise. In situations involving deprivation of freedom, concealment becomes necessary virtue, to be exercised with utmost vigilance. Activists definitely should be prepared to arrive in such situation, even through no actual wrongdoing – laws are not always consistent with morality. Behind bars, universal taboo is complaining about other inmates, whereas treatment by guards or pills prescribed are something that is best leaked outside to those who can exercise leverage, such as relatives. Directly complaining about pills adverse effects to the staff generally only gets one more pills, and getting placed on suicide watch would turn even a non-suicidal person into suicidal one, so refrain from the former and avoid the latter. Otherwise, medical staff is generally not trained to do interrogations, so they are easily fooled by their own assumptions. A successful interrogation necessitates that the subject can contest beliefs held by interrogator, and even that they be provoked in so contesting, into jumping on a challenge, into letting them spill out truth in attempt to uplift their ego cast into doubt by interrogator. By contrast, doctors presume themselves experts and expect passive agreement, and are uncritical towards their own assertions. But you may try to make policemen feel they are smarter than you and so dull their capacity to solicit intelligence – that is, when you can't remain silent (forced to testify as a “witness”, etc.), for that would be a more robust strategy.

Of importance (in regards to what was said at the beginning of previous paragraph) is that there is no need to distinguish between malice and incompetence, when you must instead think of a solution that would address both cases. Your discernment has to be solution-oriented – and the problem you should be focused on is eliminating your fragility.

Refocusing on “not wasting time to distinguish between malice and incompetence when a dangerous situation needs addressing”. You may have heard of Hanlon's razor, which states “don't attribute to malice what can be sufficiently explained by incompetence”. It is frequently misused to assert that the cause of some harm was incompetence as if it was a proven fact. I consider it outright dangerous to make assumptions: for one has no reason to attribute something to incompetence when he cannot prove it – what one doesn't know, one doesn't know and must not lose awareness of that. There is a better way: to bypass the need for unverifiable assumptions, and instead mitigate the exposed vulnerability. And remember: time may be a factor.

The **razor of fragility** (which thus replaces Hanlon's razor) is similar to the principle of no blaming, in that it promotes situational awareness and eliminates irrelevant pursuits that may escalate the problem. The razor of fragility also explicitly excludes assumptions that are dangerous. What one knows is that the actions of another put one in vulnerable position, that one is now in that vulnerable position – and it's the latter, that vulnerability to be taken care of. Pay attention: it is not that other person is vulnerability to take care of, but those ways in which you became exposed. You are to eliminate your exposure specifically, not to punish the person, and (if possible) to disable their capacity to further do harm by deceiving or ex-communicating them. The situation in which this is considered typically doesn't make violence a plausible route for any conceivable end – that is violence is not only morally unacceptable, but there is also nothing to be achieved by it (unless you are a criminal and made someone else confidant to your schemes – but I do not intend to advise criminals).

Let's see a practical example from my past. In our community of runners, there was this person I came to call Kattie. First time I met her left me already suspicious. It occurred before some elections, and I put a propagandist pamphlet someone handed me in my bag, to throw it away later with other paper garbage for recycling. That Kattie, she saw pamphlet in my bag, and she shamed me for allegedly supporting that party, which party was really not popular among youth. I told her the truth about it merely being stashed until I can throw it away, but she emphatically disbelieved me. Then I knew I was dealing with the person who may employ shaming tactics to try to discover or shift allegiance of another person, and she appeared to be also doing this consciously: thus she could be an activist, or she could be a collaborator (for police or intelligence services). Later incident confirmed my suspicions, although I never gathered enough evidence as to exactly which one of those.

The incident was talking with her over phone, and when something remotely politically related got discussed, she told me we should meet in private and discuss it not on the phone. In real life around others, she also made remarks to that extent – that there is something to talk about politics away from prying eyes. No one else in my environment then was being secretive about politics – we all had not been ashamed of our views, so this was really off. She also wasn't a person I would trust, as I prefer a person who has less assertiveness against me. But this incident was the last straw. By saying that, she raised a flag to whatever party might have been eavesdropping on a regular GSM phone call. Whole situation reminded me of “we shall meet in the place where there is no darkness” line from George Orwell's “Nineteen Eighty-Four” – not least because of the tone she used

when saying those remarks about her need to meet confidentially, as if she needed to communicate to eavesdroppers that she is trying her best to set me up. So I've figured I must indicate anyhow that the private conversation will not occur, to the party that could have been eavesdropping. It was not enough to decline interest on the phone – I needed to make sure I am not seen departing with the person for one-on-one communication, for the reach of surveillance might have extended beyond phone calls. It was time to stage a public display of estrangement.

A very good opportunity came – a 3 km race endorsed by the city's mayor. Which meant crowd, plenty witnesses (to estrangement). All my friends were going. So did Kattie. I got a haircut – a truly drastic change from long hair I was then wearing – this was first step in conveying "you ain't know nothing about me" message. We spotted each other before the race, so I did my best to be unapproachable by moving around crowd and deny her a conversation, at least until mutual friends are around. I managed to finish the race before her, and immediately went home. She didn't contact me, and I moved out of the city temporarily, so our conversations stopped for the time being. After I moved back, she would tell me that her phone bugged out so she lost my number, and that she went to every place I was once attending (gym, public training groups) to find me and try to reconnect with me. My first thought was 'creepy', but then I finally made the inference she is gay. She was attractive, so we spent a few nights together afterwards. Although she seemed to no longer be interested in talking about politics during this time, I didn't let her into my heart or my private life, for she was previously raising plenty red flags, as in "potential asset or an activist clueless about operational security (in other words, useful idiot)". Which per razor of fragility, are the same thing.

To sum up, razor of fragility can be stated as "when the picture of the situation is ambiguous, look for a solution that would hold across all plausible scenarios (mitigate fragility)". You don't need to know causation – just find out what you are to do.

Defensive measures sufficiently covered, **how one adopts genuine and authentic moral convictions** can now be considered. Next subject is therefore self-identity, how it may relate to desire to positively contribute to society, and how does one's particular way of contribution get established.

First, a clarification as to what is meant by moral convictions being genuine and authentic. For moral convictions to be genuine, they must satisfy the criteria specified in Kant's derivation mentioned earlier in part I. As such one would adhere to what they hold to be genuinely moral even if it puts them at odds to some

group or entire society and even if it is also personally inconvenient to one at the same time. He (or she) would hold such moral convictions above both his (her) desires – stemming from his (her) own ego – and *opinions* of others. That is, the criteria of genuinety delineates moral convictions from attitudes circumstantial, convenient and from public opinion or opinion conforming to some social group (instrumental to remaining in said group). For moral convictions to be authentic, their unconditional validity must be one that got established or supported by practical reason, rather than compulsive following of uncritically absorbed commandments from parents or other people who were influential at some point of one's life. Note this does not imply uncritically absorbed commandments are wrong or that they can be discarded without repercussions, rather I hint that moral convictions can become properly internalized as part of self-identity – the difference is (roughly) “fear of punishment” vs “I am what I ought to do”. What is uncritically absorbed may later be upgraded to authentic – when one's personal struggle against adversity leads one to observe its validity.

Authenticity is innate property of convictions that either passed through survival razor successfully, or that were adopted following it. A corollary is one has to face significant adversity to develop authentic moral convictions. However, survival does not by itself predispose one to living morally, and indeed people may lose all concern for others as the result of adversarial experience, or their personal code may be altered to some combination of purely survivalist convictions and moral ones. Likewise, people that undergo similar situations not necessary change in the same way, especially since the baggage of ideas they brought before survival razor was likely different. Subsequently, one can't predict another's moral qualities from what they went through. The criteria of genuinety is what separates moral convictions arisen from overcoming adversity, from all other ideas that may have proven beneficial or have become part of one's faith, which also would be related to survival razor – and therefore have the quality of authenticity – but would not be of moral nature.

I use word ‘self-identity’ in specific way, as what defines one's relationship to others: who are you as per what you are doing for the sake of society. Thus self-identity as I defined it is not to be confused with self-image, or ego, for self-image is a pure faith in one's ability, and does not have obligations embedded into it. Self-identity, on the contrary, embeds authentic and genuine moral convictions and can't be separated from them. There is thus a pledge to exemplify those convictions, one cannot violate it without feeling guilt – a real guilt, not a result of someone's coercion or experience of defeat or impotence (the latter arises from a blow to self-image instead of self-identity).

But self-identity can, of course, embed more than moral convictions – also unhelpful, stubborn ones – and this is cause of concern. Some people indulge in **trying to win arguments by appeal to identity (fallacy)**: such as “lockdowns ruined me”, “I won't be able to get higher education because of your interference”. Such attitudes are self-defeating – they are not only failing to win arguments (which arguments happen from time to time), but also sustain a pessimistic approach to life. It is true that adversarial events do damage, and that not everyone survives them (“What doesn't kill me, kills others” as Taleb rightly has put), but to persuade people you must first get yourself into position of influence, which is difficult to attain with the fatalist attitude. Suppose you won in a discussion, you think you permanently changed the other person's mind. But chances are they are reverting it the next day, unless you are an exemplary character (which does not correlate with indulging in the above fallacy) or hold power over them, over their life-being or through fear of ostracism. By contrast, self-identity is with you all the time, and the effect of blame being built into one's identity is deleterious.

The solution is simple, obvious even: never build blame into your identity. Whether that blame is of oneself or others. Recall principle of no blaming, and observe how it is related to the cardinal virtue of fortitude. You should not let threats confound (shape) your judgment. Also, to those who hated lockdowns: this is not about whitewashing harmful policies, it is about fortitude being requisite of success. The disruption of essential society rites – such as funerals – was extreme. There is no denying these things ought not to repeat, yet they are likely to nonetheless be repeated, unless those who oppose such policies survive better and seize power.

A similar but distinct case of crippling one's life to capitalize on some agenda, is a well-known negative role model called Greta Thunberg. It must be understood that she is (or was) not actual figure of influence – she is but a convenient muppet to the state agenda. You are not going to win points by crippling your life in general, and when Establishment is done using you, you will be left with what you are and what you can achieve on your own. I actually am of opinion that climate has gone bonkers and that yes, industrialization has everything to do with it (per their “Devil may care about fragility” attitude), yet what I said above applies still: whatever that is you are pursuing, you are not going to win through self-sabotage. Any appearance of victory in this case is you being means to someone else's, where your advocacy for some cause is just a tool, a cover, for their personal interests not to do with the cause at all.

Returning to the subject of relation between self-identity and moral behavior. The assertion was that self-identity facilitates authentic moral behavior, for turning one's back on it may be experienced as dying innerly. Prompted by this is also question as to where self-identity itself originates from, how it is sustained, and why it seems to be long-term, everpresent as opposed to appetites that are transient.

Tracing upon possible roots of this mechanic I've reached the following hypothesis. That **two persistent primal goals define human life: to survive**, and **to make a distinction**. Importantly, there is no such primal goal as 'pursuit of happiness', and while there are undoubtedly other primal instincts (such as reproductive one, which ensures survival of the species rather than of an individual) they are not present persistently but come and go. Pleasure and pain are mere instruments of bodily survival and ordinarily solicit only short-term planning, but survival for humans includes preservation of not only body but extends to one's self-identity. Whereas the way self-identity gets established in first place is related to making a distinction. Now, establishing one's distinction would be most properly exemplified – as in reaching its pinnacle – in **attaining excellence**. By its very nature, few people can attain excellence, so they have to make do with something else. But there are other ways to realize distinction, and I will now share those that I identified.

1. **Original and selfless contribution to humanity.** Rather than surpass all others in some feat, one may secure some unique and groundbreaking discovery for the benefit of all, having sacrificed much in this pursuit that they can't be considered to directly profit from it themselves, except for knowledge.

2. **Belonging to elite class of peers.** One has not become the apex best, but has entered the league of champions nonetheless, and can contrast himself with those who lack ambition or achievement. In a tamer variant, it would not be the league of champions, but people who practice a distinct way of life, still marked by achievements, and one's aspiration to raise to next group on the ladder.

3. **Will to power.** A pursuit of gaining authority or influence over others and securing it indefinitely, blocking others from challenging it in any way, from succeeding or surpassing one. Wants to freeze achievement against all future challenges and thus can stall evolution if allowed to have its way. Fully realized will to power is manifest in a tyrant (the imperative of will to power is "uncontested domination").

4. **Egalitarian sentiment.** A markedly collectivist sentiment springing from irrational fear that anyone rooting for extraordinary achievement will necessary become their oppressor. Inherent us-vs-oppressors group dynamics, which is how distinction gets established (“rightthinkful” vs “wrongthinkful”) – hence active preoccupation with combating wrongthink, and the belief that acting towards that makes some sort of difference. People affected by it may misperceive individualism as arising from desire to challenge and defy the group, their leader or social norms, rather than self-rooted. No, it is not identical to what Nietzsche meant by “resentiment” – most who adopt egalitarian sentiment never knew real oppression, and often are its actual (co-)authors to less fortunate peers drawn to their movement.

5. **Moral rectitude.** Not to be confused with conscience or conformity (or things that has arisen from egalitarian sentiment). Defending one's honor by upholding one's duty to others against all odds, such as being tortured, bribed, blackmailed, and despite duty clashing with one's own desires at the same time. That is, duty done in circumstances testing one's commitment to the principle of Honeste vive from the previously introduced quote of the Kant's “The Metaphysics of Ethics” work i.e. one didn't bend to forces which tried to compel one to violate their duty, whatever was their (forces') origin.

6. **Taking down a person of high status, or otherwise doing a lot of damage.** Self-explanatory. Worst kind of making a distinction. Requires a warped perception of the world that (perception) has a predicate of hostility towards humanity in general. Terrorist attacks, mass shootings also constitute this. Since the goal of distinction is a primary one, any kind of ideology used to justify these acts is in fact merely rationalization – a convenient lie to oneself. No exceptions; no exceptions whatsoever.

These are most prominent ways, rather than exhaustive list. Some long-term ways may be decomposable into those identified above, as combinations or rather alternations of them – that is, if one's way of making a distinction is challenged, but another is potentially realizable, they can switch to the latter, and the process may occur back and forth. This typically occurs in adversarial action, where opposition to predominant power can be either of pt.3, pt.5 or pt.6, while the action itself may or may not benefit some part of humanity. It is therefore something to be aware of when engaging in infiltration task for the sake of acquiring insight – a solo operator must be conscious that he is vulnerable to doubt, considerably more

than an undercover agent working for the state who has handlers and hardly makes any semblance of distinction even if he deludes himself into thinking so.

In social discourse, two of ways above get rather frequently interlocked in a mutually reinforcing dialectic: will to power and egalitarian sentiment, when the worldview of respective carriers is reduced to strictly two categories of "oppressor" and "oppressed", or "predator" and "prey", and all other ways of making a distinction are confused with either of those two. A person motivated by will to power has greater degree of freedom to abandon this reductionist worldview, than one drawn to egalitarian sentiment, because of very nature of the latter. Consequently, egalitarian sentiment is the stronger threat to evolution and advancement of society. Still, if will to power can at all help evolution rather than hinder it, it is because of factors external to it that limit its ascent. Those factors which make necessary for one to benefit their community, respect existing customs (or establish ones, checked by survival razor) and so on. A notable example of man who realized will to power yet did not leave behind a surviving ethos is Attila the Hun – we know about him only through the lens of his enemies.

Yet as you may have noticed, some among the mentioned ways of making a distinction are about succeeding through one's own merit, and so don't require looking down on others. Their imperative is pushing humanity forward, the triumph for all to share as a testament of how far humanity has came. Dialectics such as mentioned prior obscure this reality. Moral rectitude, however, does uncompromisingly assert one's superiority over morally corrupt: as I mentioned in the "Broken discernment…" section, contempt has moral value – itself can stem from moral values and then guards them. This moral revulsion, however, must be distinguished from other types of contempt, although avoiding harming oneself the way another did to themselves is still practical, so long as one does not treat it as an excuse to vigilantism. Next, none of the ways to make a distinction have anything to do with happiness. Compared to leaving a good legacy or otherwise imprinting oneself on the world, the goal of happiness during one's finite life is pretty lame. And that is, if one can even define happiness in a way that everyone would find agreeable.

Via making a distinction one's self-identity gets established, and the best part of self-identity would be moral convictions as well as those that do not contradict them. The result that one adopts moral convictions is *not* guaranteed, but depends on the choice individual makes, do they turn their back on humanity or do they not. The relevant – accepted as a practical belief – postulate of this Theory of Action is that such choice is not predetermined, but that one indeed

is free to choose and hence is responsible for the way he (or she) turns out. The choice in one's given circumstances may be limited, but there is a choice nonetheless.

Now, failure to make a distinction – when no alternative way to pursue it is conceivable – is hard to recover from. When this happens, individual may turn to pursuit of pleasure, praise or company of others (which appear to appease our senses the same way as when body is appeased). Their life proceeds on a **travelator**. Travelator is characterized by *aimlessness*, particularly by lack of strategic goal. The mechanics as to how this aimlessness arises are in order: sustained impotence, “copium” (pleasures obtained though not originally sought that alleviate the unpleasant feeling of one's impotence to succeed at what they did seek out consciously before), possession by archetype (acting out in particular way predefined by society, which either confers illusion of maturity, or corresponds to some dramatic, tragic figure).

In pop psychology, “copium” is called “secondary benefits”. In my choice of word, I elected to produce a single word that immediately flashes into one's mind all this is about, and emphasis the unhealthy, addiction aspect in particular. Having lost the battle and gave up hope one became content with comfort their ill situation provides and is no longer motivated to escape the situation – even though originally, one wouldn't accept those unwise pleasures if they could succeed in escaping, because they did have a grasp of how fragile they would end up. While it is difficult to arouse one from this predicament, it's not impossible: the chapter “On motivation and indecision” does implement an effective way to break contentment with limerence, even where one previously gave up because tried to free oneself and failed. It does – on inspection – have many elements, though, like it hints solutions for particular problems that one may have failed to overcome previously and thus it pushes one past that, so if one is to reproduce that efficacy in regards to other life challenges, she must provide practical solutions to the obstacles that can be met on the way.

Note that copium in this example is precisely contentment with limerence not limerence itself – pursuit of relationship with another person by itself is a primary objective not secondary, contentment happens when one has settled to live with fantasies instead of dropping out of it when attainment of existential goal through another person became implausible. When one doesn't leave limerence even though they were already rejected? In presence of persistent threat they can't make go away, such as social unrest or political instability, or when their life falls apart otherwise (struggling academically can be this for students).

More obvious example of travelator would be feeling stuck on the job, and dreaming about quitting without attempts to actually quit, and finding excuses for that inaction (whether to oneself or others, or more frequently, both). Another example is someone who is failing academically starting to miss studies and going out with friends to smoke weed, or playing computer games. Workaholism is of the same nature – escapism for those who are losers everywhere else. Travelator is distinguished from existential pursuits through lack of strategic aim precisely – while narrow vision around some goal (like in limerence prior to contentment) can be a strategic blunder, at least there is an aim, and typically successes, failures and learning; but travelator feels empty when on it and wasted time for one who finally escaped it.

In travelator, there is an actual element of failure rather than mere laziness: one indeed ended this way because they lack some practical knowledge – if they knew where to start (from their particular circumstances) would have started already. Like if you don't have a higher education your options *are* limited, even though this doesn't mean that another person who has it necessary lands a better job than one who doesn't have it – some people utilize their resources better than the others.

Reluctantly at first, those who are not successful resign to look for positive aspects of their unchanging situation. **Turning consciously to pursuit of pleasure is thus cope**: an unwise response to existential depression, which stems from lack of attainment. For pleasure is a plain instrument calibrated by evolution for the end of physical survival, a means to motivate one, *instinctively*, to get good and then get even better still. To enforce variance in one's exploits, so that a hunt of today be unlike that of yesterday. For reward seems to diminish with repetition. Nature also saw to it that pleasure can't be felt for too long a time – everyone has safeguards built-in to ensure that they lose capacity to feel it sometime after reaching saturation, which is most evident when one drops out of limerence with intense preoccupation (near 100% of waking time), which dropout is always a certainty. And a good opportunity to reflect upon pursuit without rose-tinted glasses so as to quit it. Society may also decide that it doesn't need a parasite who pursues pleasure without exerting themselves to contribute to society (welfare governmental programs are not society). So one way or another, one's streak of pleasure will be taken care of.

I have already given example in “Limerence in society” chapter, of a situation in which one arrives through pleasure and comfort, of being stuck with someone whose values are different. Holding pleasure as its own end makes one prone

to such traps, of hot-and-cold treatment, for one feels obliged to appreciate “hot”, and so exposes oneself to the machinations of another. Only actively rejecting pleasure and praise when they are of dubious origin can guard against this mistake – by using reason one can analyze the circumstances better than their bodily senses and so detect and avoid traps. Avoiding traps may entail deliberately going the path of pain and suffering – of course not for their own sake, but for what will be attained or avoided. Additionally, in order to succeed in something, it is necessary to turn down many other possible projects – no matter how pleasant their pursuit would be. Hence you see now why I defined the cardinal virtue of temperance the way I did.

Per what I said in passing about repetition. Pleasure is purely instrumental – Nature's trick to promote variety, to force us to explore new tactics even though previous ones were already successful at securing some goal. That is, pleasure “colors” or “flavors” ends attained (or due to attain) according to whether novel means were (are) used to secure them. The fundamentally unpredictable variance in pleasure promotes spontaneity – reason couldn't be trusted to do it on its own, so Nature retained the instinct of pleasure in humans. Instinct to avoid suffering wouldn't be sufficient for that purpose by itself, for negative reward reduces incentive to try new exploits, whereas that incentive proved to be evolutionary competitive. Also seems to be, that pleasure associated with novelty enables one to investigate new approaches without giving up too early if they meet resistance. For enthusiasm about doing something new and original arrives in anticipation of achievement already, and can thus outweigh disturbances and motivate one to push through obstacles. But when one makes pleasure an end in itself, they disrupt the natural flow of things which is responsible for spontaneity. Whereas the practical attitude to life I envision is this way: instead of avoiding pain or pursuing pleasure, learn to embrace – and even strive amidst – the randomness in which they come and go. Pursue ends that are compatible with virtue using means that do not invite ruin; do take acceptable risks and exert oneself where necessary.

Spontaneity and making a distinction are quite different things: to start with, one means variation in tactics another is conscious choice of strategy (though the necessity of making such choice is predicated from outside consciousness). Yet both are necessary. Without a prospect of making a distinction in sight, spontaneity degenerates to impulsivity, whereas deliberately making life revolve around pleasure replaces spontaneity with compulsions or addictions. The reverse situation, of purely rational pursuit of a singular aim devoid of experimentation and joy, might succeed at that aim, but if the aim was not good, less knowledge

may have been gained that could be applied elsewhere, or the success may have been precluded by rigid and repetitive manner in which the challenge was approached. And if a decent mark was achieved nonetheless, there is always a "where (to sail) next?" question.

In summary, human life revolves around **taking risks for the sake of triumph**, and the goal of a healthy-minded person is thus not inside physical life but outside of it. This prime pursuit needs not be centered on recognition, but can be centered (and this is indeed preferable) on a significant achievement impacting humanity. This achievement can even do without acknowledgment of others, if it can achieve impact by itself (covert direct action). In this case, acknowledgment would be more like a pepper added to an already ready meal that could be served and would taste fine without it – acknowledgment that follows success, rather than being success. Whereas hedonism, pursuit of happiness – are cope for losers: to reduce ourselves to pleasure-seeking way of life is to defile the gift of reason.

III. The metaphysical model: knowing oneself and knowing others

Here I will put aside assumptions about evolution for the moment, and explain the role of reason by means of the following metaphysical model. There is a "**why-how split**" between unconscious and conscious, in those processes where conscious is involved in first place. The model doesn't fit all phenomena: for those managed without consciousness, automatic or background processes, unconscious obviously does attend to 'how', and this even can be taken advantage of as outlined in "Discernment in sleeping brain" section of the current essay. Yet the split being present – in tasks attended consciously – means knowing one's own motives precisely is not always possible: remember how carefully I had to define types of self-reflection to ensure they are not confused with rationalization. I admit the metaphysics I'll do here are hardly robust but take cue of practical bits presented along the way.

In this model, there is no such category as 'desire', there is 'necessity'. Necessity as a task originates outside conscious, and conscious is subjected to attend to it. Survival and making a distinction are the primary necessities. Necessities can be derived as the result of decision to pursue the original necessity in a certain way – a "why + how" amounting to a new why, that is, a new task to attend to as instrumental in solving some other task. This grim – at cursory glance – model doesn't conflict with possibility of self-determination, for how to make a distinction remains an open question that everyone answers in their own way, and the model does assume that choice itself is not determined, even there be limitations as to what tools are available at one's disposal. Thus when it comes to

action you planned to do but only now remembered, don't reflect on its place in this model – just start damned doing it!

However, the avalanche model of "why + how" amounting to a new "why" does entail the possibility of working oneself into a tunnel vision over some unwise goal, such as pursuit of relationship with another person as an answer to life troubles, or worse yet, an escape from those. Still, if an earlier 'why' is satisfied in a different way, or a concern corresponding closer to those primal goals emerges, it will eliminate or interfere with the dead end branch. Akrateia can be fought the same way, and this here is where the connection between making a distinction and morality emerges: falling back onto moral convictions works – when they are part of one's identity – because it satisfies a goal close to the primal one, rendering all other pursuits irrelevant. Outside of context of haste, self-remembrance can help one to move out of the tunnel, by remembering how instrumental objectives emerged from earlier objectives in first place, and how thus those earlier objectives can be pursued with a different strategy. In my experience, I can pinpoint earlier decisions made consciously that led me to pursue relationship with some person: limerence always begins with a conscious decision which in so far one can confront (that is, not too ashamed to admit) one can remember.

The hypothesis of "why-how split" emerged from analysing a different form of akrateia: which does not involve haste or unrestraint, but the reverse of these. It's when there is an unconscious block over doing something you previously decided to do, and in most cases, it is later verified that the block was actually for your protection – to commit to your consciously made plan would be indeed unwise, but deep down in recesses of your mind there was such awareness unconsciously, which is why you were prevented from doing that which would make you fragile, expose you for no good reason to others. Or the plan was not sound enough, had holes that would negate the objective. Usually this happens when what you tried to do was instructed by "common knowledge" or social context rather than evolved response to your actual needs, or significant adversity happened in earlier pursuit of the goal that there seems to be no way to proceed. And the more I dug into it, the less I could see the difference between these two cases – they seem tightly related, or like two sides of a single coin? Either way, there is clear that unconscious can perceive faults with the plan even when one is not consciously aware of them, like it was an examiner, and conscious a student. The phenomenon of limerence and other "sustained focus on some task one can't snap out of at will" phenomena are also consistent with hypothesis of necessity and conscious being subjected by forces external to itself to work towards tasks presented to it.

Re earlier thesis about instinctive role of pleasure on tactics variation and how it does fit into this model. Specifically, how does it correspond with reason working on “how”? The answer is the following: enthusiasm over gains yet to attain gives reason a small nudge – it perturbs the why part. And at all times reason may circumvent it by routing earlier goal around it. We don't have to be slaves to pleasure, unless we choose to be. Nor is abstinence wise, as it can make one weaker physically. Avoidance of pain is a bit higher on hierarchy, as it is closer related to survival and thus it is harder to route around it. The jury is still out on whether there is difference between pain and suffering, such as suffering might be on the making a distinction not survival pathway, and how grief relates to them (the harder question) – for now, I would prefer to avoid speculation on these matters.

Since this model is predicated on necessities, one may inquire how planning is then possible. But of course, even in tunnels there is planning – like one doesn't conceive of practical ways of living the job they hate, but they still plan as to what daily things to do and how to approach them. Memory aids execution of what was planned: unconscious keeps track of what is relevant, night sleep is one of those times when it does its housekeeping, as a byproduct of which we see dreams. And indeed when memory suffers there is impairment in following one's plans – even ones made in prior days. One may work oneself into a travelator when they only plan routine things but don't seek global change in life – this also was already asserted. So we are both constrained and self-determined – the will is not completely free but neither it is absent of agency – and the potential for agency lies in choice. I'll be getting to a point later where determinism is revealed as implausible, though I am not going to make haste in this, dependent as that argument is on the assumptions about evolution – all references to common, memetic and vulgar narrative about evolution can be argued to be promoting scientism as well as atomicity.

If conscious choice in itself is not determined, then by avalanche model one has *most* freedom when they make decisions directly responding to the primal goals of survival and making a distinction. Now, survival pathway gets a lot of interference from instinct, so it would, in practice, afford less freedom if one has to be constantly concerned with it, yet more than one has on travelator or having locked oneself in pursuit of hopeless goal, such as in unrequited limerence. Experientially, it is indeed when I made moral choices in a tough situation that I felt having the most agency. I even used to be – as a teenager and in early twenties – a believer in partial determinism: that most of our life, we spend making deterministic decisions, except those rare pivotal events, where we must

make difficult choices and there seems no perfectly correct ones, and that this is indeed where we do have freedom to choose, affecting which path we will follow from there on. However, I don't think nowadays that we only have agency when directly solving primal goals – just that we have *more* agency there. And another important takeaway from this model, is when we have less agency, most of the time we actually limited it ourselves, having made such choices, such as conform our decisions to the idol of rationality, to some popular preference, or to some transient appetite of ours – and that we had actual freedom to choose otherwise.

Another takeaway from the above – also consistent with what I have observed in experience – is that the need for survival may awake one from the slumber of travelator. And being pushed for survival we are freer than on travelator, although fear may still lead to rush decisions, and desperation to join some community land us in bad company. Not necessary criminal one, but rather one with norms distorted away from morality, of vane, shallow individuals – even possibly intelligent and with impressive careers – one that can damage our respect for morals or for ourselves. Thus hunted by persistent threat, one shall be wary of those traps. This especially means, realizing that you will have to confront the threat to you alone, than expect community to protect you in any way. The concept of this guide was born amidst such situation exactly: wondered in wrong places for *years*, learned about my own strength in process. Those who were loved by the same people that scorned me, have perished. So much, for being appreciated by peers. This is also how concept of perseverance came to be: **the love of others didn't help them live, the ostracism and contempt from those same others didn't prevent me from surviving** – and accomplishing what I set out to do.

Now the interesting thing about perseverance, is that when I tried my best to remember how this life-affirming resolve came to be, there seemed no plausible origin in my genes or environment for it. If anything, my parents were “normies” and their parenting certainly didn't encourage any of it, nor was it favored by my peers, and while it may be assumed that it developed in response to some adversity, then why this response and not caving in like many other people do? On the other hand, it also didn't seem to determine all my actions, as I certainly did, at different times in my life, tried to find a group to belong. Yet whenever I found myself pressured into fighting for my very existence (not just physical “life”, but existing on my terms precisely), the response was to fight and not to surrender. No, I didn't have personality of a fighter or someone who seeks out challenge – rather this **(acausal) pattern** of handling adversity manifested when the adversity was most dense. But it wasn't confined to one singular situation,

it was not about survival instincts or “fight or flight” response – rather, it was a pattern underlying conscious pursuits which have span *months* – or even *years* – at a time. It was also a stance towards people I loved – I wished them to strive against all opposition, to be emboldened rather than upset by it – that is, it was reflected also in interpersonal affairs towards those to whom I had sympathy. In unrequited affections, this wish may have been only in my mind, but still there was consistency in how I felt towards those I elevated above others, and towards myself.

I've concluded that perseverance is not of material world, but instead an eternal pattern, without beginning or an end, expressed in people or living beings to various degree. Not the only one – reason is *acausal*, and includes both choice and patterns which are eternal, of which perseverance is just one example. *Not* ideas, mind you – these eternal patterns are not man-made abstractions, nor is there is prototype in acausal of every thing, nor in fact these patterns prototypes – they are a being in itself. They also can be seen – approximately though – as talents or destiny to be uncovered (what determines which purposes an individual might be successful in pursuing, even though there isn't a fixed pre-determined purpose) as opposed to the blows of fate. Since reason is capable of choice, it can pursue actions that are well-aligned with those patterns, or it may pursue some misguided agenda based on ideas circulated in society, its own fancied ideas ungrounded in experience, excessively appeasing its fleshly vessel and so on. When reason abstains itself from what it is well-aligned to do (which varies per individual), and engages in pursuing external deceptions, this is exactly the nature of compulsion.

Compulsions are thus not necessary related to pleasure – self-harm is also compulsion, including degrading oneself in fantasies without actually harming oneself physically. Engaging sexually with inferior partners, even if they are healthy, would also be a kind of self-harm (via self-humiliation) and thus compulsion. Abstinence, imprudent frugality (asceticism) is also a variant of compulsion. Even just pursuing a career without regard to one's innate potential would be a compulsion – one may attain semblance of success but still not be satisfied with it, even if he won't be able to answer “why” it is so (because he is lacking self-awareness). Thus in my philosophy, unlike that of Arthur Schopenhauer, there is no objective to negate one's will, instead it is recognized that we “social animals” are already apt at its negation, which is to our own detriment while not actually benefiting our societies; whereas charting one's destiny (according to what is wise for one to pursue) takes self-knowing, and fulfilling that destiny, takes a commitment despite all odds and machinations of others plus a lot of practical knowledge.

Why such curse on reason as to be able to betray itself? Any answer to this will most likely be a speculation – something academic philosophy can concern itself with, but that we practicians have no use. It ties after all into why we are given this mortal vessel, for if that is answered, the previous why seems rather obvious: reason must take care of the vessel in order to continue its journey through this world, and it's given rather much flexibility in how it tends to that, within which flexibility is also embedded the potential of its own downfall. Now it would be difficult to reconcile such flexibility, and the possibility of such negative outcome, with strong determinism. If reason had no say at all in that which happens, but was merely surveying and narrating it to itself, why would reason remain at all? Wouldn't it have been culled by evolution then, since serving no evolutionary purpose? If reason remains thus, the choice cannot be deterministic.

So it seems then, that reason proved to be beneficial in taking care of the mortal vessel, though it did not obsolete instincts. However, this doesn't necessarily mean that reason *originated* from evolution, only that it proved evolutionary beneficial and was *preserved* because of its utility in material world as well. I can thus conceive of a sinister theory: that some animals may at some point also had reason, but exactly didn't achieve good use of it, and thus it abandoned them completely. There even may have been a different kind of being – perished long ago – that have not been discovered by our scientists (because it wasn't of flesh or otherwise haven't left any physical remains, for example), but which may have left its trace in some myths and legends (Ancient Egypt, anyone?). This may become our fate also shall we allow those filthy utilitarians to take custody of our civilization: our reason will also desert most of us, because it will have nothing to experience except that there is no longer purpose to its agency. Already an ominous semblance of such abandonment is found in those living “on a travelator”, and from outside of it it looks a quite miserable way of life, unless you are fooled by vanity and appearances. This is why I called reason a gift earlier (when talking about pursuit of glory), and this gift is not to be disrespected by letting others take control and responsibility for our ‘happiness’, as if that ephemeral happiness was the desired end of what we ourselves would have elected to pursue, and I assure you it is not. If we were afforded a potential to look to the stars – rather than only tending to the needs of our mortal vessel – this potential is not to be neglected, not to be thrown away in deference to some human authority even if this authority believes in – or tries hard to ‘assure’ us of – its own benevolence.

Another sinister takeaway is whether properly employed, reason could have gained even more custody of mortal vessel, but that we squandered such opportunity and failed to reach that stage; or whether already there is variance between human

specimen in how much control their conscious gains over their vessel in the causal realm. The why-how distinction is thus the product of how far we came, rather than what we could potentially aspire to. This item is not to be misinterpreted: we won't achieve control by suppressing human instincts or building societies contrary to them, but rather like in case with multiple personalities, the one that is better at running the vessel wins the others fade into obsolescence. It would not be safe for reason to displace all instincts in the end, to remove constraints as to which ideas to social government can work, for that will result in decrease of practical individual agency not increase of it. And it is the latter, the strict increase of practical individual agency for each one and every, that I seek. Modern societies have several morbid tendencies: to exploit our instincts (such as in advertising, and capitalistic imperative of consumption), to demand them overruling reason (all kind of hierarchies, corporate codes, respect for “bosses”, neoliberalism and China-style collectivism), and to conflict with them (our need for reciprocity clashing with the scale of our societies and atomicity kind of individualism). It is the middle, the sucking-up-to-superiors and groupthink, that ought to be made detrimental on individual level (this can be achieved through skin in the game) – the rest will sort out itself, after that is achieved, per antifragility.

Having placed reason in acausal realm thus – for neither choice in itself (conscious discernment) nor timeless patterns are predicated on anything in the world of causality – the inquiry now turns to the **nature of unconscious**. A hasty answer would be to place it firmly in causality, but I must investigate another possibility: that what is called unconscious, is not a single phenomenon, but umbrella term for phenomena distinct from each other, grouped by only one thing common to them – that they pertain to motives and processes hidden from direct conscious scrutiny.

Physiological processes that are in principle unmanageable by conscious – which limitation resulted from evolutionary selection – would of course belong to the causal part of unconscious. They will also produce necessities, however, which consciousness will have to attend to, and here lies a trap that many fall victim to: for these necessities do not stem from earlier decisions made by consciousness – their origin is, in earnest, not identifiable with certainty (except by elimination) and one can normally only speculate about it. It is necessary thus to desist from attributing your grievances to other people or to some happenings in your life, for their source instead may be what's going on with your body, or some other interaction you experienced. Seek solutions not causes: those who grasped the principle of no blaming will avoid the perils brought by ill-placed certitude. Gotta say, I am sick of witnessing quarrels between people spread like a contagion when

there is economic recess, or other large-scale adversarial event like abuse of power by the government. How petty is to take it out at others near you! Sometimes you can walk on the street and feel the tension, even if nobody is really talking to anyone else. Like a heavy fate weighing over the city. There is no need to attribute this to acausal and to one's extrasensory ability: for plausible cause does exist, and that is a lot of people consistently struggling to juggle around their physical necessities, and thus continuously frustrated. This is not an example of 'acausal synchronicity'. This is called unrest – and unrest is, I am convinced, of a causal nature.

But it is not necessary that what is unconscious has never been conscious. Some things may have been evicted from conscious: the mechanism by which eviction happens is identifying relevance. So one reaches a conclusion as to which way to act, they forget premises. This can be neutral in itself – the whole information accessed during decision-making process being too much to retain. Or they inhibit awareness of that which might cause them to act in a harmful away to themselves and others, like I did in the story of Appendix A – a little mischievous tinkering to yield yet justifiable results. It can also be willful ignorance: suppressing facts that challenge one's self-confidence or are inconvenient, reveal amorality of what is being done. Willful ignorance does not always involve forgetting, but it certainly can do so. In all these cases, memory of how it was done can nonetheless be retrieved, either deliberately by conscious decision, or it may pop out in a dream. A dream reminding of what is actually relevant (judged so by unconscious) amidst something that was discarded by conscious: including in the case where it was benign discarding of premises after conclusion is reached, and not because one tried to remove the inconvenient. Associations surfacing in the dream might help identify that which was neglected, including due to not robust enough reasoning – one doing something under duress or while seized by fear.

In case of willful self-deception (whether for good or ill), symbolic dreams appear; in case fear, duress or haste was the cause of repression, what is shown in a dream is direct and its meaning immediately apparent to the one who experienced it, requiring no interpreters. A perfectly self-honest person thus will never see symbolic dreams. In my case, I see them when I lacked courage to stand for what it is moral – to confront authority that was acting immorally – *and* then made excuses to myself. If some time passed after the incident of cowardice before I made excuses so as to dismiss it, symbolic dreams will appear only after excuses were made.

This subset of unconscious, therefore, acts like a vigilant advisor: it values the pursuit of self-knowing and does its best to counter self-deception. If one does not engage in much self-deception, it will be cooperative and will answer questions sent (by way of mental notice) to it, in a dream or as a sudden inspiration that comes while one is awake. A thought train can be offloaded to background, where it would proceed wordlessly, yet can be translated back into words when the invisible messenger presents the results of deliberation in background. That this background deliberation does occur, presents evidence that verbal thoughts are merely a tip of iceberg, that is reason, and what is commonly seen as consciousness, is merely that which is mapped by words, but this map is just that: a map, and not necessarily accurate.

A process by which this map gets charted, I will call **reification**. Key characteristic of reification is translating isolated incidents into some property imagined to be a persistent quality of some "whole" – a generalizing attribution. Another is that reification necessary involves imposition of causality: the map's pivot points are time, and others-as-*inferred*-from-previous-interactions. Importantly, it's not others-in-themselves that one compares himself against, and so puts together a self-image, or ego (sometimes multiple). It is not even others as they appear in any given moment. It is a projection, a character imagined because of actions or words causally observed. Ego is thus a map drawn, not an actual entity, and is merely a relative measure of one's projected (rather than actual) ability to others' projected (rather than actual) ability. It is torn down and recreated all the time, and only things (actions, confrontations) remembered at a given moment contribute to this relative measure – not all that actually transpired. It is an instrument of consciousness, yet not consciousness itself.

The map can be bypassed, for example, by choosing to act upon moral maxims, or to answer the call of duty – to act consistent with what one must do instead of how apt or inept they perceive themselves to be. The time is then no longer included in pivot points, neither is the imagined relations of oneself-to-others relevant, for a moral law is such that hovers above all. This also leads to the following byproduct: a female ego in a patriarchial society is weaker than male one (a shunned, unsuccessful male one would not be better off), but egos aren't relevant, when that which is moral is pursued, and thus morality can overcome weakness and remove the cap society places on one due to their status. Another form in which map is bypassed is when it is revealed inadequate, and the immediate, unconscious or otherwise neglected (by the map) concerns override the course of action – this manifests in akrateia. All forms of akrateia is the result of trying to use a map that is either out of sync with reality or which does not address one's

relevant necessities. Hence prolonged social adversity is likely to invite incidents of akrateia, which, unfortunately, then will come in numbers. Since authentic (internalized) morality is aligned with what one learned, from experience, to be relevant in life, it can still be relied upon to navigate such incidents – even if it does not provide a perfect solution because only accounts for via negativa (not inviting demise, not escalating situation) but does not quite substitute resourcefulness which is, in such cases, inaccessible.

Morality can also enable one to operate beyond capacity that is possible at all to recognize in one's self-image – beyond limits of reification, beyond limits of conceivable and outside that which one's social standing would have made possible in ego-conscious mode. Which comes rather relevant when one has experienced much adversity or worse yet, has been cast out into exile, for such experiences directly result in enfeeblement of ego – yet whereas ego is forced into limits set by society, pursuit of 'that which must (come to) be' has none a priori. There thus can be attributed a dark, esoteric, side to Kant's statement "you must, therefore, you can": you can be much more capable in attaining the *necessary* goal than you can phantom. But, the goal that can be this 'hard necessity' is not limited only to moral goals: some existential goals can enable us to leave the gravity of ego as well, such as contributions to humanity on which a lot of effort is spent but where no personal material gain is attained, and other existential and even survival goals as well – so long as intended destination remains unchanged after ego was moved out of the way.

That being said, don't neglect the skill side of the action: you can find a way around bruised ego, can't find a way around skill that is physically missing but is relevant to succeeding. The Sevenfold Way is correct thus, in prescribing much skill development from the very beginning – even at expense of ego.

Another proof of how ego is just a map rather than a real entity, is how effortlessly those multiple personalities can disappear, when they do. They as if just fade into irrelevance, having no more purpose. And most cases I have problems with defining priorities, I still don't rationalize it as me having multiple personalities. It seems that, in all my instances of perceiving myself as multiple personalities, they necessary had different (projected) relation to others and necessary disagreement on how others shall be interacted with. Or otherwise, disappointment towards actions attributed to a distinct personality – with possibility that some or all attributions of which action were done by which personalities happen a posteriori. Without context of disappointment towards how I dealt with others, it seems I tend not to reify myself as multiple personalities. The reverse is not true – I

can be frustrated by social interactions but without imagined dissociation, as in case of haste-aggravated akrateia – most of these happened without perception of plurals, bare the case I presented in “Appendix A”, where I dissociated on purpose. Cognitive reappraisal can definitely be considered a variant of reification. The alternative to reification is to adopt a moral disposition where one rejects ambivalent treatment by another person in principle, since it is not compatible with one's desire for intimacy proper: trust, reliability is lacking.

Now as for why **words pertain to reification process, and are not thoughts themselves**. It's quite simple: mapping thoughts to wordly concepts is actually based on experience of such mapping. If the mapping is not in the collective experience, one ends up fighting an uphill battle trying to express themselves with clarity, yet she may not have any confusion when it comes to direct action that requires no assistance from others. She can recognize when she said something other than she wanted to say, which is rather unpleasant experience, and may occur with inner speech as well. Delays in inner speech may happen, as she seeks what words would capture something fleeting but “not in the palette” – fleeting what? – non-verbal thoughts, of course. If one speaks out aloud to one's own surprise, the decision to do so came which way? Not through verbal thoughts. One may have voiced what they first thought as inner speech, but was the decision to voice it itself reached in words? Precisely no.

Trying to predict what will be from what was, and keeping track of one's standing with community, does serve an evolutionary purpose for us tribal animals, despite all inaccuracy. Still, I would liken this to having a map when out in the wilderness. Having a map you consult when you have secured a location is advantageous over having none – presuming map isn't grossly wrong. But if you are looking only at the map all the time, you're going to wind up dead even sooner than if you had none. There are things that can happen in immediate moment or those that are unfolding, which may require a shift of attention. And you can make up all sort of ideas at how to act in response to sudden changes in environment, yet these ideas will fly out of the window the moment a critical situation happens. You can only condition yourself to respond to interruption through practice, practice, practice.

Some individuals do retain wise discernment even in critical situations and can execute complex actions – because of skills acquired through direct experience. No, they don't do it unconsciously or purely on instincts – they just don't waste time on verbal thoughts in the middle of these situations. Or they may engage them only very little, their focus being on things going on and responding to these

things – instead of how one landed here and who is to blame. The non-verbal is just that much faster than verbal that we don't notice it happening at all. And the communication in critical situations, tends to reduce to swear words or otherwise short commands. Yet one can feel so alert, so alive, if they don't panic – which definitely prompts that conscious is not asleep during acute incident management. For consciousness, map is only an instrument, and so thus are words.

Have you experienced, that if you are at least marginally versed in something, that it is better to first try to figure out things on your own in practice, and only then hear a lecture of already known ways to do it? Rather than first going to lecture and only then to practice, I mean. That's because direct experience is the better teacher of relevance. Once you know what is relevant, you can discern solutions for problems you encountered before, among the sea of irrelevant information. But lecture before practice, presents you with a blob of just information and no priorities – a map where nothing can be discerned as more notable than anything else, and with which nothing practical therefore can be achieved.

Next postulate of my metaphysical theory, is that **reality does not ever contradict itself**. All contradictions, all dialectics pertain exclusively to narratives, not reality. There is objective reality – which is the only thing worthy of being called reality – whereas interpretations are where fallacies originate; and while interpretations are fated to break (with collateral damage to people who adopted them), reality always remains consistent with itself.

An important source of contradiction is imposition of categories, where properties of a concrete object are erased to form abstraction about category of objects, but abstraction is stereotyped to have qualities, which may not be present in some individuals, or even be contrary to the nature of those individuals. This is not a contradiction of reality, but the contradiction that is possible within model of reality. It is not to be regarded as merely contradiction of model against reality but also within model, because categories within the same model may conflict: an object that can be attributed to categories (by ignoring its individual features and matching the gestalt of it), but the categories' stereotypical features are mutually exclusive. For example, a criminal typically will have low intelligence, whereas a person with postdoc would have high. We have a person who is a criminal, and has postdoc: is he dumb or is he smart? Reality doesn't care about such abstractions.

There are no contradictions within reality, but necessary there are contradictions in every classification. Shall we completely drop categories then? No, but we should be alert for when we are dealing with specifics.

This means, **the "can't see the forest for the trees" fallacy is but a special case of missing the relevant. The error can actually go both ways**: concentrating on irrelevant detail to the detriment of resolving practical matters, which indeed corresponds to the idiom, but the reverse too can happen: ignorance in regards to fragility – to details that indicate the possibility of ruin, details that indicate tail risk. This reverse fallacy, the lack of vigilance, is facilitated by reification. In the above example, a detective who rules out the possibility of a criminal with a postdoc, will fail at his job, or will take longer to investigate the case, because he will have to confront what he think he 'knows'. Categories are not knowledge, they are simplifications that aid practicality, especially strategic concerns – until they don't. Of such cases where generics fail, we would say "the Devil is in the details". To anticipate such cases, one can employ heuristics of fragility. Imagine that you are being brought lumber – if it is weak, that it is brought from a forest of generally strong trees is no excuse. You are dealing with concrete, with specifics. So you must throw this lumber away and not use it as part of whatever you are constructing – to the problem of construction, it is specifics that are relevant. But to the problem of supplies, the generics are relevant: the forest itself will continue to provide you with good lumber – so you continue to take from it, filtering out the weak outliers as concrete specimen come to you.

Now as for whether filtering bad lumber is done by the person overseeing construction or by a person in the chain of the delivery, is the problem of contract. It is also relevant, at the stage of planning, and if not caught there, then is hinting of the need to renegotiate the plan with others. Now, if the constructor just silently throws weak lumber but doesn't inform others in business they are wasting time delivering bad one, he really doesn't think through the interests of collective – unless, of course, the ones in power prefer to larp as authority over addressing concerns that are relevant to both themselves and others, and will thus shoot the messenger rather than oblige his pragmatism, which the constructor knows, so he abstains himself, grudgingly (and hopefully seeks a job in different place or is planning to retire soon). Collectivism can be collaborative, or it can be exercise of authority and deprivation of individual agency – this latter strain of collectivism best go fuck itself. Likewise, there is individualism of competence and responsibility – one that does not favor coherence over heuristics of fragility, and thus will blow a whistle to call out fragile practices even if it means taking risks in regards to one standing with collective – and there is one of atomicity, where it is best not to out oneself as a dissident. Guess what, bad collectivism and bad individualism coexist well enough – and foster each other – good collectivism and good individualism can also coexist. Which means collectivism and individualism

aren't terms with enough clarity – they are the kind of categories we shall drop, and instead refer for what is desired: cooperation, responsibility, competence, vigor.

And since science, defined as it is by systematization, by recognizing categories and their relation between each other, thus embeds narratives rather than strict truth about reality, there are no reasons why its narratives shall be attributed authority, but those constructed in some other way don't. Science is not the best way to be practical, nor is the worst – it depends on what you are dealing with, what is best among options available to you. Pragmatic people tending to real concerns don't care for systematization in itself the way honest scientists do (dishonest scientists only care about authority and money) – pragmatic people care only for practical results of using systematization, whether it is beneficial and whether it is not fragile. For us, scientific narrative is just another mental model among mental models we can employ. In no way scientific knowledge should be more authoritative just because scientific, unless it results in least errors when applied for a specific purpose. In some contexts, science *will* be the best way to what is practical, in some others, it won't. Now, when science doesn't point out fragility, or insists on overlooking risks and overriding what we consider relevant, it presents a narrative that is “too good to be true”, on which basis it is then rejected. Thus don't reject science per se but don't also fall for holding it on pedestal. As per Taleb, paraphrased “if I demand a cyclist to explain the physics of riding a bicycle, he will fall from it”. You don't compute your moves in a street fight via theory of relativity.

Reification presupposes thus existing of conditions where it fails, with collateral damage. Fortunately, we can exercise critical thinking and probe our categorical view of the world for points of failure relevant to the situation. Pay attention to what will make fragile, and whether it makes the generalization as a whole fragile. General smell of fragility: making expectations of people based on the image you projected on them; superfragile: attributing intentions to people based on stereotypical image of some group identity you shoved them into. There is a technique I call ‘incomplete gestalt’ – which can be used as a tool of deception, treachery and interrogation – its when you share only some aspects of your life or situations, but purposefully omit other things that would be relevant, and thus leave it for your conversants to complete the picture according to their own views and relevance. The Deofel Quartet by O9A goes even further, to the point of alchemy done on archetypes (characters onto which reader can project some version of themselves that they are/were under certain life situations) captured within the reader's psyche and carefully repositioned by their interaction in the

plot, or by stance narrator takes towards them, as narrator engages more in describing their judgment of characters than visual features of characters. Some visual features and limited background are present, but they are really minimal, done in a a way that evokes associations rather than individuates character the way it is usually done in fiction and is thought to be highly desirable by consumers. This also means that The Deofel Quartet novels are not “poor” works of fiction: the typical fictional devices are not conducive towards the goal of these novels, they are a different genre altogether, not even just an instructional text, but an enchanted, dynamic narrative – a dialectic. It should be noted that some readers refuse to engage archetypes and just see characters as “not properly written”, but they are just not the target audience cause they don't seek to learn and change themselves – instead only to jerk off to some depictions of sensuality and drama. Their opinion about these novels is ultimately irrelevant, just like it would be to the instructional stories I written for my methods: sensuality would conflict with the purpose of not justifying one's own affection (such justification that would come from romanticising it or of one's own struggle as ‘tragic’). I started with more salacious stories originally, and purposefully butchered down all sensuality to make them about sheer practicality. It is not the same technique as The Deofel Quartet's one, but it shares the property of intentionally dismissing the goal of being good fiction. But, returning to the possibility of exploiting tendency to fill in missing details with one's guesswork, this tendency does exist, can be exploited, including in adversarial setting. The classic work on such exploitation is “Art of War” by Sun Tzu.

Another smell of fragility is as to when one adopted a particular reification: such as when one did not succeed, and invented a way to cope with impotence rather than working solution. The only redeeming quality to ever using reified narratives is when systemic approach is faster, better than non-systemic one and doesn't lead to ruin; if it never worked in first place and was just an excuse, it is plain garbage. **There is nothing about propensity to invent cope that would be exclusive to young age**. Modern societies have plenty of things where one can be powerless if only because they don't have the resources of government to recklessly break the world and respond to no one. Being prisoner of war, or in quarantine during pandemic, can be these conditions. Getting convicted whether for real crime or by mistake, one does have limited freedom, even on release – through the legal status of convict, a criminal record. One still may retain some agency under these conditions, but some circumstances may impede exercise of agency sufficiently. Then one's worldview gets filled with things not conducive to success. I am not talking about ideals one can pursue – for these are actionable, that is identity,

faith – I don't mean them, they may not be very practical but they can be acted upon. I am rather talking about what one doesn't know but have made up in order to cope, excuses, explanations attributing causality without concrete proof – things typically unactionable, therefore either fatalistic or of a kind that places unfair (immoral) restrictions on oneself and others.

So these instances of reification, are neither ideas that enabled success nor adopted following success, but ideas adopted during impotence, and which involve causality attributions: about why someone (be it is the person coping or someone else) acted the way they did, etc. And one is reluctant afterwards to confront these and recognize them as fallacies, for then they must face to themselves having lost, having not fought enough or not having had agency. In this way, a Muslim woman defends her "right" to wear hijab, a person who hesitated to convert away from Islam because of death penalty declares it to be their choice not to convert away, or campaigns for others not exercising such choice to be regarded as their "self-determination". What was forbidden to one, because of one's status in relation to others and one's livelihood depending on others, such person may consider to be forbidden to everyone, and they will defend such commandments with the same zeal as a Kantian would defend that which is consistent with Categorical Imperative. Yet commandments adopted when one's agency is broken, do not have the spirit of Categorical Imperative – only an impostor of it, for subjecting others to coercion one was subjected is against it. Remember that Categorical Imperative is described in several axioms, each one, while purports to be the same spirit as others, only captures in words some aspect of this metaethical principle rather than whole. A true Kantian would fight to remove such coercion first and foremost, and the "I have gone through it so everyone must" is precisely not a valid Categorical Imperative, because it will obliterate the world if anyone will impose the injustices they are/were personally willing to tolerate on all.

Where practical experience results in success, it does not by itself result in reification but reification comes from without. It is a step that may or may not be exercised by consciousness – a specific knowledge was gained but a thesis about general applicability is not a direct product of experience, but rather a hypothesis. Easily proven: one succeeds at a contest but can attribute this to sheer luck, weak opponents, anything but their skill. Or the contrary, attribute it solely to their skill. Yet they also have a way they done this particular race, that the body will remember, and will try, within a race that seems to go their way or within one that doesn't. They may not be even aware of it, or they may still understand it is something that succeeded once, worth trying but is not

guaranteed success – regardless of which of the two ways they thought about their ability having won. Reification is not all that conscious does either, just one of its instruments.

Another way reifications get adopted is by following tastes of society. The reason sequels often are inferior to originals is because producers are now catering to an audience instead of trying to reflect some part of reality no one done before – if that is which brought the success to the opening. Experts are pushed by interviewers to declare knowledge of things they don't know, or they lose their status of being experts. Positive role models can trick people to judge by one's convenient public image instead of their far less virtuous private ones – don't get fooled by these dynamics. Reject certitude of knowing, exercise self-honesty: I don't know that which I do not know. You don't know the person on the stage who is so revered by others – they might yet be cruel to their family. Social norms are tastes, not morality – morality relates to what is practical and does not conflict with survival, social norms to authority contest and fear of exclusion.

Thus while reification always presupposes errors – conditions where it leads to significant failure in practice – ideas adopted through reification are not created equal. Ideas adopted to cope with impotence, and by following tastes of others will have the higher rate of errors, than categorical mental models that were established through successful practice. The latter can be practical in so far as they help sort relevant from irrelevant – in other words, there is no truth in categories but they can get shit done. The cost of error also varies. Also, logical derivations from reification are never robust as opposed to math logic – every derivation step introduces additional fragility into reasoning process. Hence I do not seek to make my metaphysics into a system explaining all, like Kant sought because success of science was enviable to philosophers, but rather it (new metaphysics) must trail experience as closely as possible – to deviate from reality as little as possible. I have suspicions that the theory of all will be grossly impractical – even if string theory were confirmed, who would want to use it rather than more specialized theories? If looking for the philosophical theory which tries meticulously to establish itself from ground zero, you can read Heidegger “Being and Time” – but would you want to delay real world experience until you can fully understand and utilize it, and how much it is going help to navigate real world?

On the metaphysics of all, my primary assertion would be the following: **all life is predicated on, and necessitates, asymmetry**. Hence not only supersymmetry fantasy of the aforementioned string theory is a fallacy, there is never going to be

society with equity – just forget this pipe dream. And in the beginning there was Logos, and the translation of Logos was meant to be “Reason” (consciousness), not “Word” (reification). The primary principle of reason, that of free, undetermined choice – which can impose asymmetry in first place – then produced the ‘physical’ part of universe, this part governed by causality, causality resulting from actualization: one specific decision being committed to among the infinity of equally plausible choices, none of which could be preferred over each other on any grounds other than reason itself being that which can break symmetry and establish a priori preferences. Thus the source of all causality is a posteriori of willing – strictly contrary to assertions of strong determinism – and by being part of this world consciousness our Will is likewise not causally bound. Hence our primary necessity that pertains to immaterial world is making a distinction – exactly the imposition of asymmetry where there was none, the principle at once responsible for all creation.

Outside the causal, observed and reifiable material reality, there is acausal part of universe, whose very structure defines among other things the moral fabric – this is a statement of moral realism – and a way of living that is most consistent with it results in a fortunate fate (both for individuals and whole societies), whereas a way of living contrary to it results in unfortunate fate. This is distinct from strong determinism in that societies and individuals are not absent agency – they precisely have it, but some decisions are worse than others (or unwise), some decisions are better than others (or wise). And that while on our human scale, we may see that fair people fail, whereas dishonest win; in reality, no deed is left unavenged, and societies which don't combat unfairness within themselves eventually perish, and their last days are horrifying. While this thesis rests on faith, let's not underestimate the impact of faith in true morality, when dealing with perverted communities who lost moral compass and replaced that which is moral with that which is convenient or popular.

With the above, I do not presuppose that deity (or deities) is/are necessary orchestrating the events, although neither do I rule it out, and indeed would consider faith in gods (necessary plural) to be stronger protection against deterioration of one's commitment to morality in the face of social adversity. But the key point is that **you don't invent morality, you can only discover it**. What is moral is therefore not malleable by freakish tastes of popular people – not for them to dictate what shall be done, for tides of cosmos (Wyrd) are governing this world on their own terms and without regard to what is favored by human flock.

The skin in the game is not about erasure of asymmetry per se: it is a practical epistemology that can converge society's way of life to what is moral by eliminating cheats and failed policies – it operates via negativa, eliminates wrong ways to personal success which (wrong ways) strategically bring society's doom. There is still going to be hierarchy in society, but incompetent won't be able to retain a place on top anymore, whichever way they rose to power. Winners and losers will continue to exist, yet cheaters are going to be outed, and forced to reenter race at less favorable conditions. Some may yet consider the resulting world as utopia, although my impression of utopists have been so far a negative one, and I consider them to be idiots (with Taleb the self-described utopist being the sole exception). The necessary characteristic of intellect is understanding that out of chase of utopia, anti-utopia necessarily emerges, and that anti-utopia can be made real, but utopia can never be.

Last thesis is about archetypes. In my philosophy, they are not the same as eternal patterns such as perseverance. Archetypes are rather shadows perceived on the cave's wall, or mirages in the desert – an archetype is an image distorted by certain properties rather than thing-in-itself, a treacherous semblance removed from its origin, a color in the palette used to draw a map of reification. Palettes are specific to their era (or Aeon), and their specific arrangement is called culture. Within culture, different and conflicting narratives can be painted, of course, but what can be collectively recognized and shared is limited to that which can be achieved with it. Still some artists are more industrious than others in approximating rare colors with limited palette, but to even know what is possible sans limitations, requires either lucky stumbling by experiment, or experience outside of drawing domain. **One puts themselves out in the real world, tests one's values against adversity, discovers one's own true possibilities and weaknesses rather than alleging them.** Then it is still left for them to find how these can be conveyed, which does not come naturally with overcoming adversity but is a different skill, that benefits greatly from (and requires for its full realization) scholarly study of works from the best of humanity. Other thing they can do with that knowledge is to uncover (and then pursue) their own destiny – by removing lenses of reification, now broken by experience, and attuning themselves to those eternal patterns germane to who one really is.

Having done enough metaphysics as far as present work is concerned, I am going to outline the “putting yourself out there” way of acquiring insight.

IV. Charting one's destiny through overcoming adversity

On the way to real self-knowledge one must not allege their skills and limitations, but discover them by taking on hard challenges – doing so allows to bypass reification. Besides teaching one to persist against all odds, struggles with what one precisely is not good at will result in acquiring the necessary moral character. For if one keeps only to what they are good at, they can end instead with a lot of hubris, especially if their social environment doesn't predispose them to caring about other people.

The challenges one can take on are multitude, and more can be conceived than will be offered here. I have already given some in “A path to self-discovery” section of “An existential love” essay. Generally, what you are taking on shall be interesting to you in some way, most likely “I really wish I could do this but this seems beyond impossible for *me* to achieve, so I'm gonna target a more realistic goal first”. The good thing is to start and keep enthusiastic nonetheless. Don't bother doing things that you completely have no interest in, for then you'll quit them early. So it is about combination of interest and “must strive really hard to meet this”. Usually a stepping stone is to have a short-term demanding goal, that can be realistically met if all effort is given to the requisite training. Since I borrowed heavily from O9A, the old material such as “Naos: a practical guide to modern magick” may be a good inspiration for one looking to retrace the steps. Don't get too many books, Naos should be sufficient. If philosophy interests you, you might want to learn a language in which your favorites are written, but I wouldn't bother learning languages for something I'll never read, so the way to get interested is to read those works first in translation. Go by one philosopher at a time – don't divide attention. If philosopher stops being interesting to you, drop him. Once interest is settled, you'll know which language you want to learn.

Some modern things are worth researching, especially if you plan to take part in “interesting” activity, and long before such activity is actually engaged. Cybersecurity, anonymity, libre software (GNU/Linux OS etc.), hardware that doesn't betray you, and other stuff will take years to absorb and change habits accordingly. The key is enthusiasm and gradual mastery (recognizing there is a learning curve), rather than paranoia. One has to develop a passion for studying these things and building one's defenses. With GNU/Linux the easiest way to start is to try it out via live image, then in a virtual machine, only then try it as a primary system on bare hardware (easier still when you can use a separate machine which will have ONLY Linux-based OS, no multiboot). Your priorities should be to get full disk encryption, encrypted backups, and enrolling keys in SecureBoot. It is best to forego

encryption of /boot partition the first time you set it up, and “full” is a misnomer regardless, for unless you flash custom firmware with a bootloader payload, you will have unencrypted /efi partition either way, which is why protecting it with SecureBoot is important. If you choose Debian GNU/Linux operating system, consulting manual for its installer will help with manual (by-hand) partitioning, especially if you want to do away with swap partition, for guided partitioning option in installer forced it on you. Installation on bare metal is easier when you have two machines that can go online, so that you can consult manual on one system as you are doing installation on another. Reading manuals does help, though outdated and misleading crap like “Securing Debian manual” is to be avoided. Given that this information won't age (year when this paragraph was written: 2024), I will not elaborate further on how to secure one's system in this guide – it is best to use up-to-date sources on current technology.

If you want some hallmark to achieve with computers, you can research topics such as “high-end desktop”, ECC memory (and the difference between registered and unbuffered memory so that you don't buy incompatible planks by mistake), ZFS, NAS, Whonix. Whonix wiki is recommended reading for the privacy conscious even if they won't end up using Whonix. Note that I don't imply you should start with these things – on the contrary, trying to learn these things in theory before you have practical experience with GNU/Linux or BSD is setting yourself up for failure. You will also want to have experience building (and replacing parts of) your own computer without any assistance before you start buying expensive hardware. There has been a story about truck driver finding a Threadripper Pro machine dumped into garbage which he succeeded to bring back into life, hopefully the former owner had so much money he just didn't need to sell it and was upgrading to some even bigger yet incompatible rig.

While the hardware part of these suggestions is in a way similar to recommendation to buy expensive jewelry per instruction in O9A somewhere (a check on whether you have the makings of elite to get to where you can effortlessly afford that, and a vanity trap for those just a bit short) – it is more to the practical side, as well as involving a lot of learning. If it were not for learning, you could just pursue a Ferrari, a private helicopter or whatever – these can motivate for career climb too but won't get you ahead of surveillance or protect your long-term projects against bitrot (if you have something that you'd not want to start entirely from scratch – ZFS can detect and repair silent data corruption, *if* hardware setup allows for that; ZFS also has native encryption that will allow you to send encrypted snapshots to the cloud which neither network nor cloud can decrypt). Those means of transportation arguably can help with moving fast around the country or between

countries (say in EU), but if you don't do much travel, the only thing of practical relevance you will achieve with them is placing a bullseye on yourself. Every criminal would be attracted to a visibly rich target, whether to take your money or your life, or just mess with you in general. So when looking as to what high bar to pursue, make sure it requires brainwork and skill acquisition and not just deep pockets. And to avoid vanity trap: when buying anything expensive, ask yourself whether you will be willing to replace it should it get botched, and under condition that you get denied both warranty and insurance. If in the event of need for replacement the cost of original (now thrown out) is not acceptable to pay a second time for it, there you go: you don't actually have enough money.

There are also firmware backdoors extant in basically any modern PC. If you are ready to lose your sleep, searching for “Libreboot” will brief you on those. Avoiding them is pretty much incompatible with having a capable rig, bare one thing: you can firewall a powerful system with another, outdated PC without such remote-access enabling firmware, that will act as router and sit between Internet and your modern rig. Otherwise, you can use a nerfed machine to go online, and use modern machine only as an air-gap. This route being untenable, make sure your PC is physically incapable of Wi-Fi and Bluetooth connections, and disconnect Ethernet connection whenever not in use (always disconnect it when you power off your PC). There is inherent conflict between using powerful toys (which often ties-in with proprietary software) and having privacy and security (which is incompatible with opaque design of modern hardware, hardware market practices and anything proprietary). This is why it is precisely challenging and not just a fun hobby to consider. Should you not care about privacy, however, you can always make your life difficult (yet interesting) with watercooling. Watercooling setups are inherently more fragile (which is why I would not recommend them otherwise), so practice first on cheaper hardware – the one that doesn't really need it but which you are not afraid to lose and replace.

Arts and programming have nothing in common, and hence make for interesting challenges if you are inexperienced with either. While engineering is quite a workout for the brain and difficult to switch off activity, it is not of creative nature like art is, and employs primarily logic, identification of the constraints on the problem's definition and then cutting corners towards “it passes according to our conception of it”. Real creativity is rare in engineering. Many techniques that can be used in programming to overcome being stuck can't be applied to even a simple activity such as writing a long essay. That is, in programming the task can often be compartmentalized into smaller ones. So worst case one can identify things that don't depend on each other and work on whichever one can succeed at.

Won't be perfect, but gets job done. Approaching text in the same manner, yields a text whose patchwork nature is obvious – a text that doesn't flow naturally and pushes away the reader. Painting a picture or modding a videogame – well, there is a reason there is high demand for open assets, as programming skills and skills at art not only don't correlate. They have a negative correlation exactly: a person can do one or the other. Surveilling the communities where libre or open source game are developed, I have not so far ran into evidence to the contrary.

I will skip precise recommendations on running – I was never good at training wisely, and accomplished most marks by just putting in ridiculous amount of miles. Adding interval sessions always resulted in overtraining for me, so I kept by the tried and tested approach of putting most in long slow distance and the rest into hard 10K runs over big hills (most natural way to put strength into legs). I expect reader to figure a way with better returns for time invested. Other physical challenges one may find suggested in Naos are cycling and traversing hard terrain with a heavy load – on those, would have no tips to share anyway as I passed them over. It is true, of course, that running alone doesn't push physical fitness far enough. It is not, however, only about getting fit. First, if you learn to run for your max on competition, rather than merely outrun your rival, and without cheats such as pacemakers, it will tremendously help being self-rooted and having morale independent of what other people do, as well as withstand adversity. Second, you can organize and hold your own events and thus pick up organizational skills along the way. Best balance is attained by holding events for 10K and half-marathon. Friends can be initially made by going to smaller events that are held often and on a regular basis, such as the 5K event such as Parkrun or 2 miles event such as held by Sri Chinmoy team – both are around the globe. Once you have contacts, you also will know what long-distance events happen in places near you, quite often running communities organize bus tours that will take you to those in a different city and back, or you can arrange your own. Don't neglect bus tours or other means of public transport: driving a car to another city then running and afterwards driving back can be one hell of a day. You might be unable to sustain attention while driving, if running prior has drained you – so don't do this for the sake of “more real challenge”, you may put life of others at risk that way. If you still want a challenge to add to before and after the running race, consider cycling instead.

Covert action I will go into a bit more detail. Like I indicated already in part II, this is significantly more difficult than being an undercover agent for the state, as you don't have others backing your resolve or steering you clear from going sideways. Indeed, in your case anyone knowing what you do and to what end is a

liability, and it takes a strong character to operate in utmost secrecy and accepts setbacks that occur without thoughts of quitting. There is no out-of-jail-free card or other kind of "saving throws" (DnD term) either, you are taking full responsibility for your actions and for what happens to you. That being said, the kind of advice I can share from experience is NOT the kind that high-risk (high-value) activists may find useful – high-risk defined as you being worth enough to kill or to imprison (when you have truly made yourself enemy of the state in their own eyes and state apparatus is mobilized to get you). If you are the likes of Edward Snowden or Julian Assange, or have gone public in a police state (committed overt action, or got discovered), you are on your own.

First, to address moral reservations about 'infiltration and disruption agenda' I presented in "An existential love?", section "The path of self-discovery". It is not expected for this action to result in globally-meaningful change, nor is activist allowed the recourse to illegal methods, including giving false testimony in court or engaging in collaboration with authorities (which exposes one to become a pawn of the government and complicit in manufacturing false evidence, which is guaranteed to happen). Activist must succeed through their own effort, by intercepting and disrupting social links within organization or movement. As for who is eligible target, I'll turn to my earlier project (it was suspended and never released) – one preceding Theory of Action and from which it spawned from – in which I sought to answer this question in definitive.

Excerpt

Axiom of upholding autonomy of beings (A-UA, the anti-utilitarian axiom): The autonomy and self-determination of every sentient living being (necessary including every human being) must be recognized our ultimate end. Furthermore, no good is to be considered above individual autonomy. It is not at all permissible – with one sole exception – to consciously negate or limit the autonomy and self-determination of any human beings in pursuit of any end however defined, as well as cause unnecessary violence to any non-human beings. The sole exception granted is to thwart action of another being – who will be called the malicious actor – who seeks to violate the autonomy and self-determination of a human being(s) other than itself. The extent to which violence or force is authorized by this exception is one that is merely sufficient, and not above that which is sufficient, to entirely avert specifically said violation of autonomy and self-determination of another, or which suffices to deter future violations. In the latter case of preemptive interference, the prescription of strict sufficiency is to be emphasized, as

well as the grounds for preemption must be reasonable, and the enforcement of preemptive measures is to be immediately canceled when they no longer apply or cease to be reasonable because of changed circumstances.

Thus in respect of movements that can be interfered with, the necessary requisite is they negate self-determination of people they claim to protect (for reason they declare to be 'strategy', when they profess to uphold 'nothing about us without us' but de facto exclude inconvenient members from these "us", or otherwise exhibit "some are more equal than others" mentality) – which seems to be every modern political and 'human rights' movement, but your mileage may vary. If the condition is not met, the operation is cancelled. A side note: those who want to actually help people, choose venues (at least eventually) that are not related to any sort of political power, such as working as a surgeon, being a volunteer in a shelter for homeless, and so on.

Cue the above axiom I also consider it "anti-extremist axiom", per its prescription that force (intervention), if it exceeds what is sufficient to remedy injustice, is in direct violation of it. This also correlates to an aspect of temperance (virtue): if X is sufficient measure, then what is measured more than X is already excessive.[23] For example, if the project of 'malicious actor' can be thwarted without causing them injury, that would be the only way at all acceptable and not merely preferable. Note that the original axiom did not intend to constrain the actor only to legal means as 'legal' would be defined by Establishment – for it was intended to be part of 'general code for life' for people claiming to espouse such philosophy, whereas the task of infiltration and disruption *does* have the requisite of legality. As for why the original philosophy was consequently abandoned, was inevitable issues that arise around such activities as raising children, the fact that some interventions are necessary to keep society together, and so on. Hence also my fascination with Taleb's idea of "skin in the game", for how to keep interventions checked when they are inevitable – which shall not, however, be used as a justification for pursuing unsolicited interventions in the name of doing good for another or maximizing the good of 'majority'.

[23] Beware not to apply this principle too literally across all situations: in prepping (survivalism), there is no such thing as taking with yourself only minimal supplies in order to endure. You do want redundancy, you do want to back things up with things you might not use under fortunate circumstances, but might have to under unfortunate ones. Understanding temperance as "not adding fragility" is a more robust generic definition.

To clarify thus, for the task of infiltration and disruption legality is a requirement, and the above axiom also sets the moral standards for operation's justifiability and the manner it is attended. This being settled, from here on I will thus cover the technical aspects of operation.

The earliest obstacle those engaging in adversarial action may meet will be interference from state actors, which may include interference that is directed at messing with activist's mental faculty in particular: to dissuade them from activity, to send a message that "government knows what they are doing", to instill in them unhealthy kind of paranoia. An activist may also develop hyper-vigilance after spending prolonged time in jail and then having been released back into society. This can be counter-acted with a careful attendance of reason.

Hyper-vigilance of the kind that is prompted by triggers is countered by observation: how often threats "predicted" by intuition do materialize. Most often these are false positives, and the origin of attribution error is the following: an adversarial event in the past where you reacted in time when threat became a very high probability or a material fact (such as kidnapping attempt, car stopping nearby, you fled as soon as it stopped in front of you and the would-be kidnappers cursed and yelled at you as you did get away), then you confused postdiction and prediction and started looking for cues that aren't actually specific to a threat (any sudden turns or slow motion of every car), thinking you are good at spotting threats. So you'll have to let go of that conviction, by collecting facts that speak to the contrary: that "heuristic" produces false reports all the time. In detention, one may have adjusted to the stability of environment (if it happened to be stable for them) or to presence of people one has figured out, so being released into the world when most people across the street are strangers may overload the senses with all sort of random behavior stranger exhibit. It may seem as they are reacting to you, but even if that were the case, it's likely your paranoia makes your behavior stand out and so attract attention rather than them being briefed about you, and most often actually they are just minding their business – again observation should make this clear.

Another form of hyper-vigilance, however, is persistent arousal, caused by probable event with significant consequences which you are unprepared to handle, and sustained without the need for situational triggers. This is more difficult to manage, for it won't just go away – there is unsolved problem on your mind, and the reaction is natural response to threat. Except in Nature, these kind of threats don't persist forever but in human society they may arbitrarily persist. Focus on those things you can actually do, and if you constantly monitor environment for

threats not related to the event in question, try to make mental note of that. If the primary threat can't be eliminated, all that can be done is tending to the situation, unfortunately.

Some ‘paranoia’ may have material basis. If you were released from jail (even if cleared of all charges), or have recently joined an activist group, local police may follow you around from time to time to check up on you, even if you don't have to show up at the police station yourself, or even if you do. When they do surveil you in public, and in places you otherwise frequent, they may not care about hiding it, and they may or may not wear police uniform. With activism case especially, a stranger may drop comments in your presence that indicate they have access to “inside” information, such as mention pseudonym you use that is only known to members of that group, or any other information of that type, or about your past. This spectacle (of indicating insider knowledge) in particular is typically played by strangers not dressed in any kind of uniform, and generally conveys the message “government knows” but the meaning is the opposite: actually, they don't know of your motives, so they try to intimidate you by stating things they know in order for you not to act upon motives they actually don't know. However, distinguish between messaging and preparation to arrest you – in the latter case, your adversaries perform actions that make it easier to hunt you down at a future opportunity (which may come near) rather than merely brandish their knowledge about you.

Agents may also show up in community you joined and make up claims about why they got (re)interested in (re)joining now, whereas normal people wouldn't actually do any rationalization of that sort, especially when not prompted to do so – they expect you will spot these people as clear “plants” and thus get the message about you being “watched” – once again, this means intelligence on you is exactly lacking. These are attempts at behavior-shaping: they are trying to get you to quit, to make you scared of attempting anything that may invite as much as further attention, much less an accusation of something even mildly illegal or disruptive. They know that self-censorship, once provoked, always goes an extra mile.

Overt signals don't get sent continuously throughout a year but usually annually, or during period you are doing “interesting” things. And they are, well, overt – there can be no doubt about what you seen or heard, it was definitely about you and contained information not available to general public. Though Stasi methods (that have plausible deniability about whether intrusion has occurred) can be deployed by every intelligence in the world, most work an unsettled individual

does is by themselves: correlating isolated events of definite privacy invasion with mishaps that just happen and stranger behavior that just coincides. For this purpose, merely annual provocations may be sufficient to instill lasting – or even persistent – sense of being tracked.

This, of course, doesn't mean you are not under covert surveillance when you don't see any overt signals, but the thing is: can you accomplish things you are set out to do, and what can you do to protect yourself? For those are only things that matter, that you are followed should not, and per razor of fragility, many unfortunate or suspicious things are dealt the same way regardless of their origin: make it impossible or improbable to harm you, as far as your ability allows to shield yourself from harm. You don't have to fear them, you have grounds to despise them: their life revolves around you not the other way around. They're pawns and you're self-determined. At all times, surveillance and especially the overt signals about being surveilled only emboldened me to do what I set out to do, and I have found that especially in tasks undertaken alone intelligence is too slow or too stupid to prevent them getting done.

With regards to social connections though, Stasi methods can be successful in disrupting those. Most modern intelligence services, however, would primarily target not arbitrary connections, but those specifically related to activism. However, depending on which regime you live in, and who you are, the possibility of your other relationships being targeted may still apply to you.

Pursuers that intend a definite action against you such as an arrest or an assassination may choose to be silent rather than send any deliberate overt signals. High-profile cases include both when targets had the chances to perceive being followed (which they mistook for surveillance when it was more reconnaissance as to how to get to them, including block their escape routes) and such when they hadn't. I don't have personal experience surviving these scenarios, but I suspect advance knowledge and preparations – before you are even targeted – may be necessary. For instance, there are fewer exit routes from some cities than the others.

Next source of dirty games comes from the activist community you are engaging with. Every community worthy of infiltration is going to be well-defended – for only those communities are deemed worthy of infiltration that have already demonstrated capacity to survive. For example, you may be approached by an ‘insider’ that ‘has grievances with how the group is led’ and who ‘finds your views interesting’ or ‘sees a like-minded person in you’, and who will feed you misinformation, try to waste your time by coercing you to help people within

the group that it neglects, pressure you in participating in the group activities to demonstrate your commitment (threaten that your standing will be harmed if you neglect those), and so on. That's why your direct observation is the sole source of information: you shall be mapping relations within the group (who-knows-whom and what skeletons are in their closet), and distrust any gossip you might hear.

This is far from easy task but the only way to accomplish what is sought: finding weak pieces of chain, individuals whose collapse will disrupt group communications or damage trust between old-timers and newcomers. The individuals to target are those that have tendency to overshare their personal life (bonus points if they are both well-connected and vulnerable, for group may develop trust issues if that individual is torn apart), or those with unstable character that may be recommended to strategic positions where they will stir conflicts with others and alienate them. With the latter approach, it is easier to hide one's disruptive agenda and there is even an opportunity to present oneself like a peace-maker, a mediator, and score points amidst growing group instability. This game is of course challenging to play within legal field, but possible: you have to be stable yourself and learn to take advantage of other people mistakes as they occur, that allow to set others against them. There is a chance that someone will get there ahead of you: individuals with monetary interests can be good at soliciting personal information from the vulnerable, in which case instilling trust issues within the group is taken care of for you, now the question is whether you got entrenched in the group by that time or not, because if not, group will likely become suspicious of all newcomers and you might as well ditch it and go elsewhere.

But the biggest problem may yet be you, that is, your character. Just how committed you are to the goal to disrupt and destroy the group and not to look wayward, not to search an easier way to succeed more comfortable to your conscience, not to be distracted by desire to help someone you feel sympathetic towards or whose present struggle reminds you of your past one? Not to solicit help or cooperation from others in the moment of weakness, not to search for appreciation and recognition? Are you ready to deal with the fact that group is really prepared to handle intruders and deny entry to all those who have their own ideas rather than being mere executors of leader's will? That there is just no way to succeed with the disruption agenda?

Take cue: **in infiltrating enemy, there is no gaining converts**, no setting people straight, their base material is different from yours and incompatible. Your resolve ought to be firm – to disrupt group operations, and to withdraw having

not compromised your honor regardless you succeeded or not. If there is strategic value in helping anyone, consider if you can do this by your effort alone, and that individual in question can take care of themselves from that point onwards. Don't bother helping self-deprecating individuals, freeloaders and those who can't help themselves. This holds outside activism also.

In regards to impossibility of flipping enemy assets when you are acting as a solo operator, this is precisely the catch. You are not a state entity who can propose a good deal to get someone to flip. Such propositions by governments usually target people who have monetary rather than idealistic motives, or who are susceptible to blackmail or are otherwise in their power, and is handled by people different than those collecting intelligence amidst the enemy. Declining such offers also happens, and if you compromise your cover identity, there is no replacement coming. Not being able to flip assets means whatever gossip is relayed to you by members of the group is to be ignored. Your only informant is yourself.

Why the time constraint, then? Wouldn't infiltration have more chances to succeed if it were long-term, of “sleeper” kind, to be activated later at the already perilous time for the target? Yet such success is not guaranteed, and, when put into larger perspective, limited in impact. It's not the main point, however. The task's purpose is to be a test, and a learning opportunity, so you shall not get trapped in a new identity. Upon the completion of infiltration task, you might conceive of your own activist movement, to implement real change – but this is likely a detour, a premature decision.

In assessing whether it is so, it is necessary to remember about **dialectics of conflict**, and how these dialectics can obscure reality – by prompting a certain kind of reification, an attribution error, where individual behavior is correlated with a group identity that individual professes to belong, with said often obnoxious or psychopathic individual presenting themselves as if their preferences reflect that of the entire group and that individuals attributable to said group couldn't have distinct (and even opposite) preferences of their own. Since this interaction is a negative experience, it is usually remembered more acutely than positive experiences. In order not to fall prey to this mechanic, it is necessary to put conscious effort to remember positive (or just distinct) experiences with people of the “same” group identity. That is, **reification of this kind is countered by remembering examples to the contrary of extreme, generalizing assumptions**. This requires pause, a caution; whereas haste will lead to impulsive decisions.

To elaborate, the term “group” carries in itself confusion between “group as in people with relationship ties to each other” – the most prominent example of

which would be a tribe – and “group as a reified category of people based on assumption of correlation between externally perceivable traits and inner values and motives that cannot be directly probed”. The second can be restated to be “group as in group identity in identity politics”. The psychopaths are usually empowered to act the way they do by the former – or otherwise by their position of however minuscule authority – but they deliberately present themselves as the latter, intentionally masquerading a rather selfish “I” or tribe-exclusive “we” as a universal “We”. Their tactic is a result of selection by success in practice – same as learning to manipulate people-pleasers or naive idealists. Here success does not imply positive to society – on the contrary, this tactic succeeds at expense of society: the parasite managed to carve himself a niche. In all cases, expecting certain behavior to always accompany a certain “group identity” is an error, and an error that is committed all too frequently, like all others fallacies adopted in the moment of powerlessness. Seeming exceptions – and a more robust basis for making decisions to navigate situations of real danger rather than conversations with merely rude or obnoxious people – will be covered in next part. Also, yes, if you actually manage to put the arrogant person in their place, you are less likely to attribute their behavior to a group identity than to them being an asshole with entitlement.

Experience with entryism and infiltration also shows the practical necessity of being self-honest, in regards to distinguishing what one knows from rumors one has heard. When some stranger ‘leaks’ e-mails of conversations which allegedly took place between those interested in O9A, on archive.org, you do not trust what is written there and discard this ‘information’ as fake. Ditto if one is conversing with those actors – even suppose they are O9A – and hears flattery such as “you have Aeonic perspective”, gets bombarded with ‘insider knowledge’ and so on. Ditto with fantasies such as “ship piracy” that were not acted upon – who cares about what you were planning to do but didn't? Self-honesty entails dismissing these things and not giving them any credibility, and practical value of said self-honesty would be very known to someone who has experience with infiltration. Self-honesty also entails not to describe one's fantasies and speculative “should haves” to other people, for, as ancient saying goes, “to know and not to do is not yet to know” – and it is a rather correct observation, as to whether one's reified narrative captures relevant concerns or does not: action is blocked in the second case precisely.

The ideas expressed in these last paragraphs may be obvious to some, but there is a purpose to such reminders. They guard against what one may do when he encounters bitter failure, and can't have his way as originally conceived. It is

necessary not to act out of desperation: the requirement of legality in “infiltration and disruption agenda” has nothing to do with being ‘scared’ of becoming an outlaw.

V. Skin in the game and its impostors: a critical take on religion

Ideas that “survived the test of time” are not created equal – some are involved in transfer of antifragility. Here I am going to harshly disagree with Taleb's defense of not taking religions literally, as precisely all ideas that lend themselves to flexible interpretations have this property: of benefiting those at liberty of arbitrary discarding them, at expense of those not at such liberty. The former consist of those who can do so because of position of power and certain guile, the latter – of those are not in position of power, who are under vigilant watch of authority that denies them opportunity to discard useless or harmful advice (authority possibly including close relatives) or lack guile otherwise: for example, through being autistic. This asymmetry of who can cheat religious doctrine and who cannot, enables the cancer of authoritarian religions to survive and spread without skin in the game (evident in hypocrisy of many Christians, who don't exhibit manners, humility, restraint and empathy they demand of others), hence **ideas that are only good if not interpreted literally should not be considered to exhibit Lindy effect**.

Christianity is the chief example of what it means to sell out – to enter a pact with a rather cunning authority (Imperial Rome) to become a mass religion. Rest assured, it served Emperors well: in removal of skin in the game department. Something Taleb most surely recognizes – but wants someone else's name on that realization. His entire “don't be a sucker” weltanschauung shits all over the Christian ethical doctrine and is the most covert rendering of Nietzschean life-affirming ethos – so covert it puts O9A to shame: he achieved his aims of repackaging Nietzsche's ideas to those who might not otherwise like Nietzsche, and yet did not get his books banned. I laugh in the face of those who want to proscribe O9A as a ‘terrorist organization’ (an organization it is not, mind you, and has nothing to do with terrorism): the most dangerous books have already been written, and no one is in hurry of banning them – for what can be a better way to break one's moral integrity than to convince them their ethical code is the code of the suckers? Nietzsche and Taleb are way ahead of O9A in that department.

As a matter of fact, I have come from religious family, raised in Russian Orthodox Church tradition and have been weekly church-goer throughout my childhood. The most devout Christian was my grandma (already on pension at the time of

my birth), who would take me to the church with her, and I would have spend time walking with her at her very slow pace. Though she put the cloak of piety while in church, in mundane life her manners were shit and she had a sense of entitlement as if everyone owed her – which might had to do with that she has worked in a particular sibling institution of police, to do with internal affairs and in particular prison system. The entire family also considered Soviet Union to have been ideal state, whose fall was a tragedy, and I remember the words of my father (then I was not yet 10 years old), that “the Cold War has not ended – we lost in it” and “you must learn English because it is the language of the enemy”.

Father indeed taught me English ahead of school program, as he did many other subjects as well – so in regards to my talents I have ended being “Daddy's girl”, although initially they were not this differentiated (early school could do both math and literary contests, preference for tech subjects arisen later with ability in humanities correspondingly declining; also, I was *not* then able in sports in slightest, due to being prone to anemia). His faith was also weakest among family members, which ultimately enabled me to question it as I grew up. In late adolescence, I have completely converted away from world religion and never went back, my business with religion have been limited to attending funerals of my relatives. I would not call my present weltanschauung a strictly atheist one, but it verges towards a mix of atheism, resurgent paganism and a militant stance against all so-called “Abrahamic” religions (I will rather call them Magian from now on) and all their interpretations and secular adaptations. Nietzsche's writing style might not be quite my favorite, yet I rather agree with his Anti-Christian message in particular. Another part of my weltanschauung are custom-made metaphysics, with human life and entire humanity being in cosmic scale expendable and insignificant. The context for what follows is thus set (along with excuse to dismiss what I say to those who need it – I don't care about you either, close the guide and good riddance), and you can infer already it is going to get tense.

To soften up the “tearing down the old idols” rhetoric a bit, I will provide some useful exploits for navigating life on one's own, as is my trade as a practical philosopher. Note it is not because of my generosity that I do this – rather, these exploits are replacement for what you may have sought to obtain from authority, since by the end of it you are not going to trust any.

During my infiltration task, I pondered the question of how to tell a story that would motivate people to see things the way I do – to solicit a certain outlook rather than compassion. The story would be a cautionary tale – don't do this shit to people or else. However, my own unhealed trauma kept getting in the

way of this, getting me bogged down in irrelevant details. Later, as a part of philosophy project, I would shift mindset to write **an instructionary tale of fiction** instead, akin to ones in The Deofel Quartet. This practical mindset is good at enforcing distinction between relevant and irrelevant, and thus can be used to process trauma as well.

Imagine this setting: you are writing a narrative based on your real life events, and this narrative you intend to publish (not for real, but pretend so). You want to turn this narrative into instructive example for others, and you need to put stuff you have experience with – for credibility. And at the same time you wish to remain anonymous indefinitely after its publication, and it is a certainty that if your identity is ever revealed, you will go to jail for a long, long time. So you need to switch up details, but your ego gets in the way. It seeks to be known, to vindicate itself, to get others commiserate with itself – whatever. You need to overcome it.

First you switch your narrative from first person perspective to a third person perspective. Your character is no longer you, they and their life circumstances are now under your control, for as a writer, you have infinite power over what happens to them, and what they feel, think, or do. Other characters you introduce – you have same omniscience and omnipotence with regards to them, as well. All limitations are only in your head now, and only until you chose to remove them, so you remove them, one by one. You set yourself a goal for your narrative – you want your readers not to commiserate, but to be affected, changed in a certain way, judge things a certain way – to adopt moral values that you derived from your experience, and to that end narrative must be centered around these moral values instead of details of what happened. The goal allows you to overpower your reluctance to see your characters as mere pawns, means to this end, to alter everything. You pull in the events that happened in a different timeframe, to different people, and you change the timeline of story itself. You tear apart memories of the personalities people you met in your life had, into basic shapes, then compose from the whole pool of those pieces new personalities. You invent experiences you never had, and ascribe them to your characters. You explore venues in life you never had, but those which would be intriguing to explore. You invent and describe actions and thoughts of characters other than the original protagonist, that protagonist isn't aware of because they happen in their absence. Everything that is not relevant to the goal of influencing readers – that does not obstruct or help that goal, but just serves as a background or a decoy to confuse intelligence services working to lock you up – can as well be made up.

The point is not to actually publish this story, so don't sweat over whether such story, if published, would have commercial success. But for exercise to be effective, the story needs to be written (for yourself only in reality) and edited as you fictionalize it more and more. Protect it the same way you would protect your diary, unless you really don't care in real life whether somebody else, including possibly law enforcement, reads it. Two ways I do it: 1) type it on a computer with an operating system running off an encrypted disk (even better if said computer is never connected to any network) 2) on a live operating system that doesn't save anything to disk (the story will be lost after reboot or power outage in the latter case). Or you can write it on a paper you can burn without environmental damage. These are all safety measures, however, and the story doesn't need to be protected any more than it would be hazardous in real life to lose possession of it – the part about "being a criminal" and "publishing" in the exercise were a setting, a context to facilitate as much imagination as possible, as this is what leads to success.

As you work on said exercise, you can experience an affect, and it may be a negative one – possibly even one of grief. Edit your story so that it disappears or is changed. Once you're done with the story and satisfied, you will now notice that what previously mattered, matters a lot less to you. You may also revisit your past that doesn't seem traumatic but is somehow of interest – this technique will uncover trauma if there is one and repair the damage. It is self-reliance and self-sufficiency, all the way.

Recent events may be more difficult to work out, to fictionalize, or they may produce stronger affect. If you are at the down point of your life already, it is wise to then refrain from this technique and save it for better times – review what's on your plate and see if you would handle grief on top of that or not.

I also learned not to waste time on telling tales when I am already pursuing a superior venue to make an impact, just as I learned to leave certain people along with their errors, on the path to their demise. This lesson is reflected in my definition of temperance: *selectivity of pursuits*, is an inseparable aspect of it. Adversity is the supreme teacher of relevance – which is the type of wisdom Aeschylus meant in "Agamemnon" when he referred to "wisdom coming regardless of desire" through pathei-mathos – although skill to overcome adversity doesn't come with it but rather only if we stumble on this successful way. And mind you (but don't let this damage your spirit), the conditions for acquiring such methods in first place often require "feast" rather than "famine" times: as taught by prisoners of conscience, you don't prepare for a hunger strike in jail by practicing hunger

strikes while free, but by being healthy. Hence the other aspect of temperance as I defined it, of not damaging your physical stature by abstinence beyond measure.

As for initial goal to enforce values through narrative, it must be recognized that contrary to what censors believe, **coercion to beliefs happens primarily through societal pressure, it is hard to be coerced by a book**. With the book it is easy to project what one wants to see – indeed to withdraw such projections is hard, requires conscious effort and a lot of self-awareness. Whereas with person, you can be afraid of them, or of being rude to them, etc. You just have much less obligations towards a book than to a person you engage, fewer concerns about it may track you down and show up with a gun to your house, have influential friends, etc. Grooming is the primary way the terrorists are made, the other is initial predisposition to violence plus the need to rationalize away the pure desire for violence as if it was for some greater cause instead of being for its own sake like it really is. Ideologies by themselves don't have this power, it is either coercion by human agency (often by an agent provocateur) that persistently engages the target of brainwashing, or an act out of desperation by a weak-minded person.

Since it is experience that commands what is relevant, anything written is perceived through the prism of what one's experience established as relevant prior. You may have noticed my commentary on “Anna Karenina” so far “missed” the point Leo Tolstoy tried to communicate a religion as the only way forward, and the metaphor of train which kills Anna Karenina meant to represent Industrial Society (pay respect to Ted Kaczynski for outlining evils of Industrialization – otherwise, I would have never took notice of this aspect). On first reading of “Anna Karenina”, I indeed did miss it, as the sloppy, obviously rushed (as if in desperation to finish the work), argument Leo Tolstoy presents at the end for “religion being better cure for hopelessness than philosophy”, was not convincing me in slightest, and I certainly was biased towards looking for “set out to learn through experience and live, set out to pursue love and comfort and die”. But after discerning author's actual intentions, I remain unconvinced still by his argument in favor of religion over philosophy, and instead give preference to Nietzschean proposition named “transvaluation of all values”, even though my method to it is different (see next part: Razor of relevance) and does not utilize the notions of “slave morality / master morality”. Take cue that both Nietzsche and Tolstoy thus give different answers to the same problem of anomie, which resonate with us or don't per “whether shoe fits the foot” principle.

So we established then, conversations have more sway than books. However, it is not necessary that one copies values of others (the dreaded *dialectics of conflict*

enter the chat) – he may adopt opposite ones more fiercely, which becomes more likely, if his relevant needs are denied or ignored in debate, and he sees his conversant as an adversary. The condition of seeing conversant as adversary rather than figure one might hesitantly trust, is one of independence – nothing is to be gained from compromising. Keep in mind, is that is not enough to not see the person as authority figure, but that any person you think can be even marginally useful might be able to convince you with lies – even 'useful tools' have leverage. So when I say "adversary", I mean it: strict hostility is implied. But you can still employ a cruel trick while being adversary to someone else: find out what he attributes to values of the enemy, and lure him to recognize himself manifest those values. The lure must be subtle, however, you should not make direct accusation – the person must hit realization and accuse themselves. This self-accusation on behalf of victim can happen outside of discussion. Another corollary is that is better to infiltrate hostile causes when one is still learning to navigate political activism – so that your mistakes will not sink the good cause.

Some people demonstrate a serious defect in regards to learning from experience. Who is not open to experience? He who worked himself onto a travelator, and took to a particular reification – never to confront other people, not to risk any disagreement. He who was bullied by people in position of authority – not peers – into submission, and thus all his views consist of cope over impotence. Such person lacks what I call **mental sovereignty**, and if these people develop low self-esteem and start engaging in self-deprecation, they are on fast track to suicide. In my experience, these people are beyond help: per temperance, we are to leave the lost causes alone. Note that a person who does have mental sovereignty – and thus internal locus of judgment – may have misfortune stacked against them, almost lose all hope, become disappointed in oneself, have suicidal plans, and still not commit suicide. Whereas the person who lacks mental sovereignty and sees themselves as a burden to others, can commit suicide on a whim. The latter case of externalized judgment with projection of low worth to others I call "negative allocentric thoughts". They indicate highest suicide risk and readiness at all possible. Fortunately, people like me are "incapable" of having them – something to do with high perseverance, I presume.

Never judge yourself thus for suicide of those with no mental sovereignty – it takes a god to prevent this, it is no task for mortal. Remember Anna Karenina: a person can develop delusion of not being loved, even if she is. The same way, a susceptible person can develop delusion of being worthless to others, even when they are not abandoned in reality. And lacking trust in experience, they are not going to even recognize the disparity between reality and their paranoid delusions

of abandonment and worthlessness. Which is why this is no task for mortal: this can come *any time*, without external provocation even, and the person being closed to experience, to challenge such delusion is virtually impossible – they are only listening to past authority figures, which are not real people anymore, these internalized ghosts being (with likelihood) even more judgmental than the originals where. In essence, **lack of mental sovereignty is scarcely different from insanity**.

Hence the modern extension of term gaslighting to also mean all cases of trying to convince a person that what they hold true is false, or what they hold as relevant is irrelevant, I find acceptable. Indeed – if the term gaslighting is not appropriated for this – for the attack on mental sovereignty – then some other term must be invented promptly.

Allocentrism is an impostor: it relates to people-pleasing behavior and tendency to socially-motivated self-deprecation, whereas **the proper concern for others is cardinal virtue of justice** – justice, being proper concern, is also not neglectful of individual worth and individual reserved, inalienable share. Support network that correlates with allocentric mentality (but correlation doesn't equal causation) might be at best useful deterrent to low mood, but dependence on support network means fragile, and won't help against delusions. I have seen allocentric people kill themselves while not being abandoned, I have seen asocial people survive in isolation. The latter person I still get to see in the mirror every day. Hence the following observation:

Peer acceptance is fragile. Past accomplishment of personally relevant goals is robust. Defiance is antifragile.

An important note: defiance being antifragile, does not start being a lot but grows as you live and becomes greater in perspective, hence why you need to stack in accomplishments – like running 100K under 13 hours, for example. To alienate people is also not prudent, but diplomacy is tricky, especially considering that late in life, you don't get many friends (in some cultures, you don't befriend anyone in adulthood at all, e.g. South Korea), and trying to retain arbitrary people doesn't work either. Retaining old friends is the only time-tested strategy (true Lindy effect), so don't bow into pressure of being open about your sexual orientation and/or gender identity (if applicable): friends are friends, whereas peers are merely peers and the latter's judgment is not relevant.

Having warmed up thus, let's proceed to the following observation. As we'll see, **for ideas that work on collective rather than individual level, the semblance of Lindy effect can be an impostor**. Religion – in particular its ethical department

(rather than fasts) – is a firm example of this. Hence ideas that hang around and won't perish, must be rigorously scrutinized: that something has worked, is not good enough. The relevant question is: *for whom* does it work? Behold, **ideas that bend – antifragility of the virus vs antifragility of the carriers**.

Rather popular, it seems, Darwin's theory of evolution is among mundane folk of today, as it gives them something to claim knowledge about. **Darwin might be on par with Kant in being misinterpreted**, though for different reasons. The perception of life as constant struggle for survival – as used by various Neo-Nazis – is one of the most dangerous ones. Darwin's idea of life was not as constant struggle for survival, but rather that struggle for survival took place from time to time, and the cumulative effect of such incidents had been *reified* – by another person – as "survival of the fittest". This means there is no survival of the fittest on individual level – on individual level, there is only survival. Survival as taught by Darwin also doesn't take place only under scarcity – on the contrary, it places checks even when resources are abundant: predation (by different species) limits prey's population even if there are otherwise sufficient resources for it to grow. Hence it would have nothing to do with ideas such as Lebensraum – living space that needs to be taken from other nations – and **human's quest for excellence is not born out of survival but is parallel to it**. Indeed the best conditions for it are when one's survival is not threatened – when one is not hindered by scarcity – because otherwise the goal of excellence is subject to too much interference.

So there are "feast" and there are "famine" times, and while certain skills might be learned in famine only, most skills develop better under abundance of resources – or even require said abundance for their proper development. It is Fragilistas[24] that breed weak men, not 'times', and when I mentioned survival razor in part II of this treatise, I noted that it checks and selects extant skills for practicality – it does not, create skills that did not hitherto exist nor is the best time for such creation. It judges, but what is brought before such judgment must have been acquired in first place. The hard ('famine') times, therefore, simply create conditions where false ideas collapse quickly and in great numbers – an avalanche results, with collateral damage to people who were affected by failed policies, even if these people would not have voluntary embraced them had they the choice. Now the

[24] A 'fragilista' is Taleb's term for those who attempt to reengineer society with abstract ideas or scientistic positivism, prototyped on think-tanks and policy-makers of Soviet regime and graduates of Harvard university. If an idea comes from 'scientific theory', the works of Marx or otherwise constitutes mimidoshima fallacy instead of being practice checked by reality, this is idea that makes fragile, and fragilistas are those who create and/or enforce adoption of these ideas.

utility of “skin in the game”, would be precisely to be able to check ideas during abundance, disincentive recklessness and contain the damage while making the judgment from such contained instances known to entire society, thus prolong the longevity of society until whatever next Great Filter is discovered.

Cancel culture can be considered a false twin of skin in the game: rather than combating narratives contradicting reality, it is (or became) enforcing narratives contradicting reality – by virtue of going for dissenting opinions as opposed for strictly going after corrupt policies, such as form the basis of transnational corporations. If you want to challenge corruption, then don't buy from Amazon you dumbass, but leave honest folk like Richard Stallman alone. Cancelling people over how good they talk optimizes for wrong metric – one that those who run Establishment is precisely good at winning, and which is the reason for instability of modern world. Winning in debates is different from winning in real life, and in regards to public policies, we as society want them to work in real life first and foremost.

True acts of virtue are less visible compared to virtue signaling. The confusion is the following: if the conduct is inconvenient to the actor, it must be somehow virtuous. Yet there is no such causal relationship between inconvenience and virtue. Acts of sacrifice can still be foolish and detrimental to others and not just to the one who commits it. They can also serve the motives of vanity and impulsivity (manifest in charity). In reality, a sacrifice doesn't make a weak man equal to a resourceful one, the weak stays weak, the stupid stays stupid – yet **resourcefulness is a precondition of true virtue**. Otherwise acts that pertain to virtue signaling are performative, and stem either from lack of self-honesty or to consciously cover one's private interests that are pursued out of public sight. In the first case, of lack of self-honesty, one is trying to appease internalized authority figures of the past, to satisfy an abstract invisible audience – to the exclusion of people actually around oneself who might be negatively affected by this, or the contrary, one benefits leeches who profit their private interests from this. Such virtue signaling is concerned with form instead of destination (“being empathetic” vs “taking care of concerns of a living person physically next to you, without overriding their agency”). The second case (I mean motive behind virtue signaling, branching from several sentences prior and not the sentence immediately before) – of pursuing one's own private interests – has to do with corruption and concern trolling.

While I won't speculate whether it started this corrupt, cancel culture ended up profiting neoliberal (capitalist) agenda. From my perspective, **it doesn't matter**

if anything started grassroots, and then was subverted, or was the ploy all along: it has proven to be an idea that bends, which for ideas adhered specifically collectively, is a very bad thing. Note implication: with ideas adhered individually *conscious* tinkering might sometimes be a good thing, provided one is aware of tail risk of doing so. I am not at all fond of “fake it till you make it” – myself being much into “tinker with it till you find your way” instead. The ideas that bend without notice are still problematic even on individual level, though, and good ideas don't need any further tinkering – think of Buddhist wisdom “to know and not to do is not yet to know”, Taleb's “there is no distinction between intellectual and pseudo-intellectual in absence of skin in the game”, etc.

In regards to “evil” seeming triumph over “good” – or rather hypocrites' triumph over idealists: this has to do with hypocrites being more skilled at debates, *and* the fact they conceive to conceal treachery from outset. That is, they tend to their own image in practical manner, and this pragmatic approach succeeds over “appeal to identity” fallacy: fallacy of expecting the public to recognize one's benign intentions despite not being good at talking. There is thus nothing peculiar to evil winning over the hearts of public – the good can also take on this pragmatic, strategic approach to speech, and utilize guile in defense of the real and noble goal. Since it is not in bed with Establishment, it will of course still struggle, but it can do better than it does now, even prior to final adoption of skin in the game. The collective adoption of skin in the game is a project yet to be solved, and getting good people in position of power might be exactly necessary to defend real skin in the game from being confused with some impostor that Establishment will conjure and throw the people's way. For it seems a significant share of population needs authority figures, and can't engage critical thinking – to steer these people's perception there has to be infiltration of government's ranks by good-willed people.

‘Happiness’ is another idea that bends, and the capitalist rhetoric that tells us “it is the sole thing we need” is used to promote atomicity. As in George Orwell's “Nineteen Eighty-Four”, from memory: the commandment of old was “thou shalt”, in centralized societies it become “you must”, and the final totalitarian commandment is “*you are*”. We are approaching this third, final stage – being told that our need is happiness and that we don't need to set our own goals, for we will be provided for (The Great Reset agenda). The dilemma of freedom vs happiness can be illustrated by “The Matrix”: *bluepill people* are those that choose to be happy (which takes ignorance), *redpill people* are those that choose freedom – and pursuit of freedom takes conscious rejection of happiness as a worthy goal in itself.

But in regards to happiness, a similar yet distinct thing exists: one that is not about personal comfort. This kind of superior happiness I will call “eudaimonia”, which is not some abstract idea that can pursued as a goal, but an eternal pattern just like perseverance. Eudaimonia is a pattern of certain harmony between individual and social life, which finds its expression in a person that does their duty of their own accord, because of understanding that duty is what preserves society, and not for any other end. Importantly this pattern cannot be presenced in a recluse but requires one to be a part of society. Both deontological and virtue ethics can be expression of eudaimonia, but not consequentialist ethics. This also pertains to **how acausal can be presenced in the causal**: by individuals aligning oneself to these esoteric patterns (the flow of universe, or Tao in Taoism) instead of some reified doctrine, archetype or causal abstractions. When agent's causative potential is actualized it conveys these patterns to the causal world. The alignment itself is attained not through emulation, but via negativa: by elimination of concerns that clash with them – by rejecting all false ends.

An example of *one* such false end – a causal abstraction – is happiness in utilitarian sense. Archetypes in my philosophy are also impostors, a type of parasite that, rather than being free life that can attach oneself to others, is given semblance of life by the person who voluntary (yet through lack of self-honesty) sees themselves as fitting a certain role in society, having “ascended” to it. That is one gives life to archetypes by draining one's own essence into them. Such person is then duped by the false epiphany, and it eclipses their rational Self, constraining one to parameters of said archetype. By contrast, one that aligns oneself to eternal patterns does not have narrowed reasoning, for by rejecting all false ends and appearances they uncover their real nature which is already manifest of such patterns. This property therefore tells apart eternal patterns and archetypes: “being empathetic” would be an assimilation by archetype, whereas “healing the pain of a living person physically next to you”, if earnestly done (without ulterior motives), an expression of eudaimonia. This honoring obligations that hover above all, I call **serenity**. In somewhat pretentious Occult language, serenity is one of exoteric expressions of esoteric pattern eudaimonia, and this expression corresponds to genuine and authentic morality as it was defined in part II of this treatise.

Thus my rebuttal to The Great Reset agenda is following: the globalists will own nobody, and whether they will be happy or not, they won't have happiness at others' expense. It remains to figure out an effective way of promoting skin in the game, but the least part one can do is to not feed globalists' pockets.

So-called safe spaces are not safe. They too have cliques, “winners” and “losers”, and it takes a certain mentality to win there as opposed to spaces where you can be direct and rude to annoying people. At the end of the day, it is still about winning debates using one ruleset or another. Hence these places are navigated like all social places are – it is often optimal to minimize participation, and make yourself instead a person one would rather not cross because of your resourcefulness. Don't walk in there if you are struggling – these places will only make you worse than you were, their sole meaning in practice is exclusion of certain demographics and prohibiting viewpoints (that is, they are safe from outsiders not safe per se). If you don't know how to make friends fast (and exit community immediately afterwards), it is pretty much pointless to enter them.

Peace is a fragile concept. ‘Peace’ is actually a rhetoric that suppresses justice. This is not to say that I lust for war, rather that absence of war – while really a good thing – does not imply order within society, and absence of unfair struggles. There are indeed significant problems with so-called ‘multicultural’ societies (and with allowing for diasporas to exist) that such societies can't be really considered existing in peace, even if they don't engage in warfare. A ‘multicultural’ society is, however, a misnomer – society is always a single culture. What we really have, is multiple societies in one nation-state, most of them hostile to the rest, but only one society is self-sustaining, the rest are parasites. And that we lock individuals in their ‘cultural identity’ instead of allowing them to assimilate, I call “cultural segregation”. It is continuation of the mockery that was done with blackface: the outward facet has changed, but the essence is not – individuals are not allowed to jump cultural boundaries but are locked into them and can't escape. And you wondered, how did Trudeau go from blackface to a figure of insane ‘diversity’ policies – it is merely a change of appearance but precisely the same method otherwise. It sucks that the word ‘diversity’ was appropriated by these people – Nature does real diversity, whereas politicians actually engage in a variant of ‘divide and conquer’: ‘divide to retain power’. This thought train also ties with ‘identity of rebel being a false twin of defiance’, and how this can be exploited to negate opposition's threats to uber-rich.

In previous part, I've talked about how conflict with arrogant individuals that put the cloak of group identity, promotes prejudice. The imperative to reject generalizing such encounters to some global identity still holds – even in situations where violence is threatened – *yet* we also have the right to defend ourselves. How these can be balanced? On individual level, risk analysis takes place: make it impossible for them to harm you, but if you still can distinguish self-defense and precaution from taking a hostile stance towards other cultures – good, and

indeed what I am arguing for. Collectively, my resolution is that we should allow ourselves to bar certain nations from entry into our countries: but with the reasoning that this is not because their culture is bad, but because *we fail at adapting them*. This is a honest answer: we fail at adapting them, and *some* of those migrants granted entry then kill our citizens, we suck at distinguishing who would and who would not kill among these certain nations, so we are not going to take chances – we will bare them all from entry. We are indeed admitting shortage of our ability here – but this is better, than to risk lives arguing that solution should still be searched for.

Indeed this change to “admit our failure” rather than to always find ways to look successful even though we are not so in practice, would be a positive change to politics. Let's just say that ideas that sprang out of League of Nations and its successor United Nations, have by now been tested for a century – and we found that none of them work. They were modeled around how we in the West understood relationship between culture, religion, society and state. They were also ideas adopted after adversity, rather than ones that carried us through adversity – while the former aren't bad per se (they are a matter of faith), they have by now been disproven by reality. This is existential crisis of the West, essentially: faith that we formed after previous adversity, has now been tested by new adversity, and thoroughly disproven (existential crisis of individuals the same way works). For instance, while Westerners regard (reify) Muslims as some singular category of people, there are factions within Islam that are actually hostile to each other, countries that won't accept refugees from another Muslim country and so on. So this is it: we are going to admit failure to impose our view on the rest of Earth societies, and hence also that the world doesn't actually need the guarantees we tried to enforce (such as self-determination for ethnicities) and we don't benefit from them either.

As for what I think of migrants (kinda making things harder for myself a bit), they should not be allowed to build networks among themselves and must succeed on their own merit, and should not be given any cheats. By default, individuals are malleable and have tendency to adapt to their surroundings – whereas conservativism, retention and defense of old habits, are primary a group phenomenon. These networks – diasporas – reduce adaptivity (malleability) of the individual to the recipient culture, so they shall not be allowed to form. Since our nature is tribal, to bring down such networks it would be sufficient not to allow family members to ‘reconnect’ – indeed we should make a prerequisite of marriage that at least one party is a native citizen. Now why their own merit and no cheats: because patterns of failure run across generations. Those who can't figure out

their way to success are gonna breed children who won't either, and thus will resent the culture of the country their ancestors migrated into. In which case, it won't matter whether their ancestors seemingly naturalized – the descendants will turn hostile on it.

Democracy is merely an instrumental value: the real value is freedom as in individual self-determination. What's worth is democracy without individual freedom? It ceases to work then even on superficial level: democracy is predicated on being able to make one's own judgment, to challenge and oppose existing policies – it is fundamentally incompatible with scientism because of the latter's war on “fake news” and “misinformation”, that is, with monopolization of truth judgment by the state. The whole premise of democracy – even as a theatre – is that grievances can be reported (even as a toothless “peaceful protest”), and belief in necessity of transparency. To be more than a theatre there would have to be actual accountability – as in skin in the game, and fast rotation of authority when policies fail. When independent judgment is no longer allowed, however, then not only does it bring down the foundation of real democracy (suppose this might still be a thing somewhere), but the tickets to the theatre of ‘democracy’ are also no longer in demand. The contract between Establishment and the citizens – to pretend we have democracy while we can still criticize the government – becomes broken. Current democracies are all theatres: the public power is limited to the rarer-than-annual vote of trust towards those who were already selected by Establishment. A ‘democratic’ regime of today is about window-dressing: the **games played by those in power** are the same around the world.

The number one game played by politicians all over the world is doing things you prohibit others to do, like parties during lockdown (e.g. Boris Johnson), or fairy tales of equity spoken by those who in no way would want to equalize their socioeconomic status with ‘the people’ (Kamala Harris). **This is not mere hypocrisy but precisely a ritual of indulging power**: you celebrate being above others, as you make the rules for others to follow but which you disregard. French president Makron[25] and his pension reform is another example of this, and he shall not pretend that because constitution allows some exception in regards to pushing laws, that going by said exception is in the spirit of real democracy. We shall not trust paper to define reality in which we are living – else we would have to maintain that North Korea is also government for the people. If reform

[25] Intentional misspelling – ‘Makron’ is the final boss of a certain video game, the leader of militant civilization which resembles Borg from Star Trek fictional universe (for being a war-lust technocracy whose ranks are filled by assimilating other species and augmenting them with tech).

was needed, it would be relevant to debate the details of it and refine it in a fair manner – sledgehammer approach is not excusable.

Republican vs Democrats is a variant of “good parent, bad parent” or “good cop, bad cop” – these are the politics of exploiting contrarianism and dispersing angst through false offers. While its easily to see insanity of these, a lot of people are actually fragile, and when they break, they cope through adopting extreme contrarian positions. For fragile people, recognizing this position is unhealthy doesn't help them to break free from it. Only a strong and healthy mind can resist it – merely being able to consciously recognize its nature is not sufficient. People engaging in cope abandon pursuit of making a distinction and are thus easier to control, hence why politics drifted away from exhibiting any moderate positions: they (moderate positions) would allow one to escape turmoil and shape their own destiny.

What the left calls ‘mansplaining’ is really just a special case of “lecturing the birds on how to fly” done for reason of power flexing. This patriarchial manner of scolding others for not catering to authority is all over the place in academia, it doesn't take place just between men and women, but also between men and men. Thus it would not be consistent, for example, to rally against mansplaining yet support scientism. This is an universal phenomena of power flexing – of hubris, of using authority to indulge the feeling of status – this doesn't, however, mean that this power flexing is a real purpose of authority nor should it be tolerated. The actual meaning of authority is responsibility, and it would make world a better place if we deposed all those who exploit position of authority to make themselves feel good.

We shall also pay attention to a certain **correlation between “society prefers indirect, nuanced, between-the-lines speech” and the degree of dysfunctional authoritarian tendencies in it**, that is established and robust preference for power flexing and loyalty over honesty and competence. This observation was triggered by me encountering research on “low-context” and “high-context” cultures, and realizing that while most of it is bollocks (that theory reifies too much variables as one metric applying to whole culture), my actual conclusion stands. It is not about individualism vs collectivism, but precisely the traditions of either weak, fallible authority that permits criticism vs strong, unchallengable authority. It also pertains to how individuals NOT in power talk about figures of authority, rather than how authority might talk to its subordinates. Indirect speech is a bait to force one to rationalize and justify, instead of critically investigate, the status quo. This provides another piece of the puzzle – people who

do not “mean what they say, say what they mean” enable the rot to ascend to and retain positions of power. You'll find such people amongst all cultures of course – but within some societies they are prevalent through negative selection, whereas healthy societies shove them to where they belong.

A related game is fatalism: stating or believing that there is nothing contestable for individual, that Establishment ‘knows all’ and will never fall. I avoid individuals with fatalistic weltanschauung without bothering to distinguish whether they are feds, useful idiots or merely depressed – they are a disease.

Fascism as a scapegoat is an example of idea that bent, but not to the benefit of Establishment. Hell, I actually think that people who take fascism to mean ‘regime characterized by lack of freedom’ rather than ideology are smarter than those who adhere to it as it was intended. Practically smarter, as in street-wise (in real world), for they do have self-awareness: they know which regime they personally don't want to live in, and they don't care how it is dressed and whether it calls itself ‘democracy’. Hell, North Korea also considers itself the government for the people, doesn't change that I wouldn't want to live there – for I do distinguish between narratives and reality.

The idea of “them evil Nazis” is really all about US consolidating its superpower position in the Brave New World. The NS Germany – the dreaded Third Reich – wasn't worse than Soviet Union or Western countries in war. Atrocities were committed by all sides, and Japanese virus-brewers were also spared (by US) those summary trials that National-Socialists were subjected to in Nuremberg. The narrative about Nazis was used to avoid the soul-searching: to suppress self-honesty, to associate evil with ideology of the enemy, when ideology had in fact nothing to do with it – Western governments have set precedents already for all the methods, including eugenics. In Jungian terms, Fascism was pushed into the Shadow, but unlike Jung who thought it belongs there, pushing things into the Shadow is actually always detrimental. For per my experience, it does not actually compartmentalize them away – it only hides them from self-reflection. One taps into their Shadow everyday: when they reach for arguments in the debate, when they are cornered by impotence in any task – any time one's skills are lacking, one immediately taps into the Shadow without realizing it, and exhausts every single option they have there. Shadow is not the way things are prevented from being used – at all. It is impossible to prevent one's tapping into the Shadow, and it involves no personality switch – one reaches out there without hesitation and without awareness, especially in desperation.

That is, **in my philosophy, Shadow represents the parts of psyche that are cast out of all active narratives about oneself**, or otherwise neglected by those narratives. This doesn't make those parts dormant – only unaccounted for in one's self-image. Shadow is merely what has not been lit – what does not enter wordly conscious, yet still gets acted upon. That is, Shadow is a region of psyche beyond one's self-awareness – a territory unmapped by reification – not an archetype. For acts are not constrained to which is verbally thought (reified) and akrateia is one of those artifacts of disparity between consciously held narrative and one's factual decisions that makes this particularly visible. One doesn't lock evil in the Shadow – but the contrary, things that are neglected don't get refined, cultured development, and thus result in harmful (or unwise) actions *because* of said neglect. Shadow is not a product of morality – but of fear and willful ignorance. Shadow is also not static thing that can be known – it is rather everything that one doesn't know about oneself at the time, so it would be actually changing throughout one's life, never vanishing completely as our cognition is simply incapable of reifying the entirety of psyche and holding the complete picture every single moment. Instead, one can become aware that they are always more than they see themselves to be, furthermore that self-image is not only incomplete but might also be incorrect, and then one must find a method to damage prevention and damage control that doesn't rely on impossible task of cognizing all – a way to act wisely without exhaustive knowledge about situation for this exhaustive knowledge no mortal can attain.

But whereas there is Shadow-as-a-region there is also Shadow-as-a-projection, a rationalization of one's horrors attached to a person of ill notoriety. An earlier example of personified (projected) Shadow, before Adolf Hitler, would be Attila the Hun. What do we know of him? Did he really call himself “The Scourge of God” and thus give credibility to religion of his enemy? Sounds too convenient for me. The actual neofascists do get scorn from me though: they are longing for the past that never were. Jews – or rather Judaeans – didn't trick you, Romans did. Roman Emperors founded a way to protect their own authority – the way they molded Christianity was an answer to that question. Such was born what I call Imperial Christianity – in contrast, the Christianity of first Christians and that secular ethos of the left prototyped on it I will call Egalitarian Christianity. Imperial Christianity is not a religion of the slaves but for the slaves – *for the subjects of sovereign*. The tenements of Imperial Christianity are patriarchy, the cult of old age and masculinity, submission to state authority, regarding state authority as God-given, justification of wars by national interests. Cerebral Roman customs (cerebral = those which plebs can understand) did become part

of Christianity – it is the better part of Romans that got side-lined, which led to decline in technology after the fall of Empire that would not be recovered until the Renaissance. Egalitarian Christianity, on the other hand, is defined by “everyone should get a trophy” mentality. But the most important thing about Egalitarian Christianity is that it is a pattern that Romans already learned how to subvert, and modern Western Establishment inherits the means of such subversion, so it is useless to try to win with either secular or religious form of it.

Modern Jews have nothing to do with all this whatsoever. Not to mention that ultra-orthodox faction within Jews is hated even in their own country, Israel, for being filthy slackers exempt from military service. The narrative of ‘Jews as guardians of Holocaust memory’, also only serves Western interests, but real Jews are expendable to them. Only decades prior, US was opposed to existence of Israel, and it seems with 2023 tragic incident they are at it again. Though not surprising, for academia is dependent on money. When studying and defending your student projects, you are groomed to seek grants from the beginning. Dictatorial regimes have plenty money, which is why Pro-Palestine movements emerged suddenly from Arab-bankrolled universities lol. You can thus scrap the mythology about Cathedral and the entire NRx (neoreactionary) movement: the world is still run by capitalists not academia. Academia is a bitch for those who can pay.

While ‘fascism as a scapegoat’ is a recent development, controlling population through narratives is not new. The ethos of those who maintain power through narratives is called Magian – the descriptor ‘Magian’ appropriated by me from O9A. **I came to understand Magian not as some ethnicity of Iranian or otherwise non-Western origin** – which would not make sense given later Roman Emperors' endorsement and enforcement of Christianity – **but rather as those who are better at deceit than at solving actual problems**. Magians are the wordsmiths, magicians as in circus show – myth-weavers, apt at distracting the public, snake oil entrepreneurs with hubriati their franchisees. Adoption of Christianity as a state religion has served interests of Roman Imperial rule – a rule concentrated in one person, whose claim to power is “God-given”, who is a sole sovereign and the rest of empire, his subjects. And it is there and then that Magian ethos has become complete, an enduring legacy selected out of the anarchic sects of thought in ancient world which sects kept impregnating (influencing) each other without any ethnic boundaries. While the term “Magian” may have originated in (or in connection to) Zoroastrian religion, what should one care about non-proselytizing variants of Magian-in-that-other-sense religions, which, even if still passed upon from generation to generation in small communities, have ever diminishing number of followers? They don't have impact on us and shall be

left alone – no disrespect attached to them. Whereas of those religions which seek conversion, influence, and power, there is a reason to be judgmental, and for the basis of said judgment, it is the kind of impact and not their origins, that shall be discussed and scrutinized, and for this discussion therefore Spengler's theory (as outlined in his “Decline of The West”) is irrelevant.

A revelation is precisely a prescribed way to reify the world – a narrative – as well as a mandate to prejudice. The categories of people that are prejudiced against are distinguished by their traditions, practices or their ethnicity. Of course, the “religious” people will never acknowledge the traditions of others as traditions, but will instead portray those people as “savages”, “barbarians”, “infidels” and so on. Yet while Nietzsche's writings weren't published yesterday, “On Genealogy of Morals” is infested with antisemitism, and hence while I am very opposed to Magian religions because of them being bad instructions that make one into loser, it would be a folly to enlist such book as one's ally. The revelatory garbage doesn't trace to just one origin, because there is a world-view of Greco-Roman plebs with its cult of masculinity mixed in, there are Persian roots as well, and nevermind Hinduism is not any better. Religions based on revelations are merely proven instruments of control: easier it is to control subjects who can't call out authority's incompetence by forcing subjects to believe “there is no such thing as bad government, there is wanting too much from government”.

Thus Romans have engineered the negation of skin in the game, and this disease proved to be quite viral. Success of *some* Jews in the modern world might yet be an accident related to appropriation: you cut tribalism out of Judaism to make Christianity (“who is my neighbour?”), but tribalism is precisely necessary. Originally, when Jews were against Empire and later European states, they were outnumbered. In the atomicized world, Jews became successful again because they are tribe operating against individuals, and there tribe has an advantage. For who is goy? Esoterically, goy would be he who isn't a member of a tribe – goy is the unit in atomicized society. He is all alone vs the state. Western leaders also found another way to exploit unnatural (one that doesn't respect tribe/stranger distinction) sympathy: to make commiseration porn out of Holocaust, but just like ‘inspiration porn’ from which I derived this new term, commiseration porn does not pursue interests of the individuals whose lives are woven in its narrative – they are merely material to make narratives with.

The religious commandment to be compassionate to strangers has caused a lot of damage to the world. In reference to a question that Myatt pondered about himself – in his (dated year 2015) article “Catholic still in spirit?” on

davidmyatt.wordpress.com – I would answer it in affirmative, since per his relationships with women in Myngath he does come across as being *compassionate to a fault*. This is indeed my thesis that restraint in exercising compassion – or rather, sympathy – is necessary, that fairness is fundamentally incompatible with compulsion to compassion towards all humanity, and yet suppressing compassion as in Nietzschean mad fervor is equally an error. If one lacks restraint I mentioned, their character exhibits a certain bipolar quality: a split between extremism and impulsive actions done out of pity and present moment considerations. Sympathy can also fuel desire for vengeance. Extremism thus can result not from ideology but from sympathy being a pendulum just like pleasure is, and itself would be the cause (and not the consequence) of adopting (or even creating a new) extreme ideology.

Per insight above, religions that revolve around compassion as a 'virtue' are always antecedents – and thus responsible – for existence of their radical interpretations, although it still takes one to accept certain cruel means also in order for one to personally become a terrorist. Do note that a religion is not merely a book – books can't hold gun to your head, or judge you, or threaten you with ostracism, or cast into doubt your courage and thus steer you into reckless action that would 'eliminate such doubt' – people can do all of these things and more. Religion is precisely a system of societal coercion and authority backed by physical force and ostracism: the majority of terrorists have religious background, or otherwise experienced a form of grooming. Those who have been groomed, might not even had these inclinations naturally, but rather acquired them because they were raised in religious tradition, with fear for their life being the actual motive – fear that religious doctrine (that was forcibly imprinted by them) prevents them from recognizing, religion suppressing their self-awareness. These individuals, of course, wouldn't make the high ranks that orchestrate the deeds on behalf of others yet themselves stay alive, but rather the low ranks that will explode themselves (literally): instead of recognizing that threat to their life comes from other terrorists or from religion, they were taught to confront this fear by rejecting life. This is a fake confrontation, of course, but religions are that wicked: rather apt, at deceiving one about the nature of their struggles, and turning the blame inward. Compassion is an instrument of perpetrating said deceit – it convinces one pursues the good, selfless cause and thus must reject (sacrifice) everything of personal value. Take cue about how 'love' is loaded with several meanings, and every single one of them but limerence pertains to gaslighting: defending the agency of he who acts out of (fake) compassion and negating agency of he who is subjected to said act they didn't consent to. At least in regards to religions

based on revelation, we can say they are fundamentally opposed to self-honesty as self-honest people don't tolerate narratives whatsoever.

Lone wolf terrorists arrive by different route, though. They seek justification for their *pre-existing* violent inclinations in ideology – they need not arrive to that point through compassion, they may indeed lack any, or rather this may be precisely the point which separates terrorists from extremists and defenders of extreme ideologies like David Myatt who do not themselves commit disgraceful deeds. In the makings of a lone wolf terrorist, there is a self-sustaining desire for violence, arisen not in relation to anything that cries for vengeance, but out of self-righteousness, instinctive belief in one's supremacy ("Might Is Right" disposition), etc. rationalization for which is found in ideology rather than ideology being the cause of this disposition. An arbitrary person exposed to extreme ideology will not cross the line to become a terrorist – even if they otherwise "adopt" and defend extreme views (an example of such defense being item "Vindex: The Destiny of the West"[26] by David Myatt, dated 1984). Declared beliefs and what actually gets acted upon may diverge (this is the split between reification or narrative about oneself and unconsciously held values) – Myatt may have told himself that "violence purifies and makes a man", but in immediate situations was driven by concerns of what is fair and his ability to put his strength in service of a fair cause. Those who do cross the line, on the other hand, in absence of ideology are guaranteed to find some other criminal prospect anyway: commit a violent crime for a gain, or for some other end but with such crime being necessary a premeditated one, or become an employee of intelligence services such as CIA and FSB and so indulge their rotten nature with the protection of the government.

Consistent with my statement about compassion being a pendulum, David Myatt of pre-lamentation era seemed to have alternated between both errors: suppressing compassion when pursuing a political objective, and being prone to commit

[26] This and other items published by David Myatt during his extremist days are regarded by him as rather unfortunate errors per his statement which can be found on his website in appendix of "Standard Reply To Requests" item: *"I reject and disown all my pre-2011 writings and effusions, with the exception of my Greek translations, the poetry included in the published collection One Exquisite Silence (ISBN 978-1484179932), some private letters written between 2002 and 2011, and those few items about my since revised 'numinous way' which are included in post-2012 publications such as The Numinous Way of Pathei-Mathos (ISBN 978-1484096642). My rejection of all forms of extremism is explained in (i) the 2013 compilation Understanding and Rejecting Extremism (ISBN 978-1484854266) and (ii) Myngath (ISBN 978-1484110744)."*

adultery out of haste[27] to support a female friend in distress, and eventually thus also susceptible to grief over a person, that, in my view, could not be rescued, her demise only delayable but not avertible. It is like command over sympathy was not his strong point, and he worked around this with hacks rather than developing such command directly. Through this lack of command, Myatt thus acted as ideologue that fostered and defended (justified) extremism and terrorism, but didn't become terrorist himself (laws equating the former with the latter notwithstanding, for the difference does matter to us). He since came to reject and criticise extremism, as well as earnestly expose errors that cause or sustain attraction to extremist ways ("Understanding and Rejecting Extremism" and "Extremism and Reformation" works are cue). He also developed a new personal weltanschauung, which underwent significant revisions but which I would still describe to to be continuously evolving. Despite I am being otherwise skeptical of the ideas one proposes while living as a recluse, I do take note that he is rather explicit this is his weltanschauung and not a philosophy peddled to others, hence I won't do any negative presentation of his ideas even where I disagree. I have, in fact formerly adopted bits of some past version of his weltanschauung as part of personal faith (as in ideas adopted following survival that carry one rather than adherence to some religious doctrine), so I am rather indebted to his works, even though I would later forego much of it in favor of my own ideas. I also found his work on translating ancient texts authentically to be highly valuable.

So Magian is a regime of guile to make narratives, and incompetence. **Incompetence may yet (at least in some circumstances) be worse than malice**, though. Against a formidable enemy, you can learn, but incompetent allies make fragile. Worse yet, Magian religion in particular fosters incompetence in subjects also – in those not in position of authority. The poison of "it is ok to be weak or to fail", pushed by declaring there to be found virtue of humility (or "wholesomeness") in being disgraced by failure and lack of strength and/or determination. The reality is the contrary: glory to the winners and misery to the defeated! No honor and no moral superiority is to be found in losing: only a fact of having lost, and one must either train better or leave for another venue, not seeking an excuse for not being

[27] The case where Myatt sought to help Twinkle is genuinely tough to navigate: he might have unconsciously recognized that short of betraying his lover, the outcome that Twinkle's suffering is alleviated is not guaranteed. That is, words being not enough and him not willing to accept that he might just lose a friend despite his efforts, a friend who have already gave him a favor of a meal in advance. Analyzing this situation feels like analyzing chess game from the side: you are going to see more than players can, thus it is not even remotely fair to compare what one might be able to do vs what one could think of when he was an actual party to the game.

fit enough to succeed against others. This matters, because the incompetence of those without power, also reinforces the need for authority via fool's hope that authority will solve problems and make better. It takes self-honesty to admit that help may not be coming and that inviting bad help can make things worse yet, no matter how bad they already are.

Outside of collective goals (Imperial Christianity being what suppresses skin in the game), my personal opposition to Christian religion stems from the fact that it doesn't push individual to pursue success: individuals that it makes weak, could have been strong instead, or at least stronger than they ended up. For Christians don't encourage weak to get stronger, but encourage people suffering setbacks to embrace weakness (humility has everything to do with humiliation). Those groomed in religious (church-going) family are not allowed to be proud and successful: they are effectively taught that failure is a virtue, and success a vice – whereas in reality success is a virtue, a failure is just a setback, whereas giving up and resenting the successful is a vice. The best expression of this mentality I've found in Lynyrd Skynyrd: “Simple Man”, which in my mind is associated with precisely harmful advice, not words of wisdom. I always seen this song as being in the same vein as Pink Floyd's “The Wall” album: in “Simple Man”, the man recalls the advice mother gave him and how it denied him ambition – he is not happy about it but the trick was really devilish, subtle, it doomed his adult life. He had been held down by a tether that denied him healthy development – healthy development being not necessary when your only purpose in life is to be a donor of antifragility to those in position of authority (**the answer to “why Magian religions do this shit to people?” question**). Mere examples of such parasite authority would be Establishment and elder members of your family (grandmother in my case – the exemplar of entitlement and hubris without wisdom), hence also the answer how the former attains this: through the latter.

Any true Christians – those who are not contemptuous – eat dirt on the bottom of society. Successful Christians preach, but do not practice anything other than religious rites (of which ‘fast’ would be an example). The result of selection is that Christian practice and preaching diverge precisely in the ethical dimension. The Christianity of successful people is about coercion and exclusion, and demanding of others to trust authority figures – but they don't apply ethics of compassion to their own life. This doesn't mean that ethics of compassion are otherwise sustainable, but rather that those “not taking Christianity literally” types are exactly what enables the cancerous strains hang around rather than die out. Even worse is the situation with abstinence from sexual desire, which like any shame over inherent part of nature, is the genesis of perversions. “Love Exposure” is

an entertaining film to watch that nails this point home: I would consider it to be “The Sum of Christianity”.

Side note about being subjected to ‘inescapable’ shame: compulsion for seeking humiliation (self-harming behavior) is one outcome, pedophilia is the other. There are only these two. What makes the difference is whether one internalized shame, or made oneself above judgment but is judgmental towards “women who are not virgins”. There are never going to be priests that are not child molesters – it is the causative result of any ideology that promotes chastity as a virtue. Thus it is correct to call all proselytizing activities grooming (as in child grooming) – for religious proselytism is nothing but an act of traumatizing people for life.

I thus strongly advise against shame as tactic to raise one's own kids – it has an incredible tail risk, strategic, with permanent consequences. Instead of humility, one shall teach non-pretentiousness – rejection of vanity and of popular fame as being a definite sign of success – which is quite a different thing. Note that coincidence of renown with one's success is still possible, just is not indicative. Compassion as a motive shall be recognized an excuse for incompetence. Adversity shall not be regarded as making person better (as in pitiable and thus closer to God, Christian's depraved view) or worse (like Greek perceived unfortunate) – it presents an opportunity. The merit of the person is how they handle that opportunity – we shall neither venerate criminals nor detest those who succeed against fierce opposition. But to handle adversity, one must have resources that come from outside it – among other things, confidence, which confidence mostly depends on parent's ability to instill it, otherwise it can only be won rather late in adulthood, and in unhealthy way through harnessing much arrogance before transmuting it into confidence proper. I also do not deny that though some things may be gained from adversity, some other may still be lost, and lost irreversibly – I look at learning from adversity without rose-tinted glasses.

Some words ought to be spoken **in defense of non-religious spirituality**, and particularly in favor of not using materialistic explanation of divination and Tarot cards working. Merely two years ago I would be myself wary of people who claim to use Tarot cards and obtain real results, however, the thoughts I am going to share next in this paragraph made me seriously revise my attitude. First, I called it a definite fallacy to rationalize things before experiencing them: mimidoshima fallacy to be specific. Second, suppose the following materialistic explanation holds: the power of cards is not prediction, but (re)assigning relevance – attention shift – which works because cards are attributed authority, and because of this authority such change occurs on unconscious level as well, possibly breaking

one out of tunnel vision: now we became capable of noticing things we would habitually overlook. This is a change with much positive potential – but how can their (cards') authority be preserved if it is explained away? Here we come at limitations of science in improving our lives – indeed here science proves to be an obstacle.

Superstition, not religion, is conducive to moral behavior: believing that one's misfortune is a result of one's own transgressions against others makes one seek atonement and approach others to repair the damage done, or at the very least to vow to be more careful with their conduct towards other people in the future. Revelation, on the other hand, is conducive only to prejudice and self-righteousness. Then there is this disturbing issue: scientism does challenge superstitious beliefs and thus undermines the self-imposed vigil that makes one wary of repercussions for behaving immorally, but state guardianship and projection of power by means of religion onto mundane authority are unfortunately well-compatible with scientism for I've known professors (of technical subjects! not humanities) who declared belief in Christian God (in reality – patriarchy and authority is the ‘God’ they worship). This means religion, by striking a deal with corrupt science, can keep its drawbacks without any of the benefits.

But while I am in favor of superstition as what results in development of healthy conscience, I must caution against belief that people are judged for their thoughts also and not just by their actions – one is going to end up neurotic for many thoughts are entertained only to be discarded, and I am of opinion that premature self-censure might curtail discovering a moral course of action in a tough situation where such can found only through pause and serendipity. Just few paragraphs before I said that shame over what one has no control over directly results in perverse behavior (in fact, perverse behavior doesn't develop any other way but through ‘unavoidable’ shame alone). I prefer thus the old Hellenic view where label ‘hubris’ was assigned to actions only. This doesn't mean I endorse all things Greek and Roman, but there are gems in that legacy that must indeed be dug out and embraced once more.

However, superstition is but a tool that should not replace other tools, such as paying respect to projected negative consequences that science can make us aware of, and which must be admitted to vet against the course of action. Fundamentally, no matter the intentions and projected positive consequences, everything negative takes hard precedence during deliberation – it shall not be weighted against the positive in some quantisized model, but instead shall stop action in its tracks. Thus I am much in favor of a ‘negativist’ science – a science of “fuck off and

desist" – that looks at what will be screwed and exhibits hard preference for avoiding harm that will result from implementing policies over reduction of any other harm by implementing those same policies. It would indeed therefore yield judgment against lockdowns and won't take 'potentially saved lives' for a valid argument. Better the Devil you know, I say: deaths are inevitable, saving lives is hopium. Stay-at-home orders can result in divorces, manslaughter, homicides; whereas 'social distancing' in agoraphobia and psychotic paranoia. A lunatic in power can do a lot of damage – and if he is a president of nuclear-capable state such as Russia, can fuck with entire humanity. You can't have a mathematical model for this shit. Thus, in society-wide policing (and worse yet, above that scale), when fighting harm can only be done with other harm, it is best leave things to divine not human administration.

Given that some people can't let go of reductionism and their need for a rather simple meta for morality, we might yet benefit by teaching them to embrace Taleb's Silver Rule ("do not treat others the way you would not like them to treat you"), which as you might guess, is a via negativa restatement of Golden Rule occurring in his book "Skin In The Game: Hidden Asymmetry in Daily Life". But by itself alone it is not sufficient instruction: epistemology of what does harm is necessary. Such epistemology can be provided by negativist science, to which then must be added a certitude that merely probable harm will necessary result and can't be avoided whatsoever (in programmer's lore this is known as Murphy's law). Further they shall be instructed still, that if they would find something merely a nuisance or an inconvenience they might be conditionally willing to tolerate, they still don't impose this on others – unconditionally. For since attention to details is not their thing, they need to be reminded not to judge by their own tolerance levels what others can withstand or tolerate.

Last note concerning religion is on Islam, and I will be brief: **what choice there can be exercised, if religion declares that if you convert away, you deserve death**. Where fear is involved, agency shall not be presumed. I don't care how hard the brainwashed will fight for their continued lack of agency – I know reification is a thing. Their defense of their unfreedom is cope that crystallized over sustained impotence. They are plagued by a disease that we would prefer not to deal with in our societies. If they are not willing to change tenements of their religion to bring them in line with Western secular law, nor convert to atheism and Western weltanschauung, it is eligible to deny them entrance to Western countries.

Religion thus covered, now onto **criticism of Stoicism**. While I don't want to discredit the philosophical currents in Ancient Greece and Rome – as Ancient Greece and Rome are the real foundations of Western civilization, proven by advances brought by Renaissance and Napoleonic code (the revival of a rather competent legacy) – I still have to single out Stoicism because how dangerous it is to cherry-pick it. The issue being, that Stoicism (capital letter) precisely looks like a good idea, but details matter and how you spin it is a decisive factor in whether it will benefit you or will harm you. Antifragility requires sensitivity to stressors not ignorance of them. Imprudent, tactical resilience – desensitization to negative feedback, carelessness – can make one strategically fragile. **Indifference towards things that are relevant is a grave mistake**: indifference towards study in university may lead to not graduating. I suspect that, Stoicism without prior grounding of oneself in reality, degenerates to Solipsism. That is, it may be not good to learn Stoicism prior to acquiring practical wisdom, prior to having secured one's position within society; it is definitely not a good idea to eliminate one's worries instead of tending to what is relevant. It is also necessary to be affected by one's mistakes in order to learn from them, to recognize failing where it is relevant, not brush it off as “I have lost nothing”. That which is not sensitive can't be antifragile by the very definition of antifragile (convex response to stressors, which means growth from exposure not indifference) – except at expense of others.

Furthermore, our time needs daring heroes. Those who abstain themselves from service unto humanity shall be remembered with scorn. In modern times, Stoic instruction is perceived through the lense of helplessness and passivity, whereas the need is for pursuing contested offices, competition over power – for actually competent people to get into positions of authority. Stoicism can also promote atomicity: by declaring one's problems to be due to one's opinion rather than a systemic issue that calls for justice, or otherwise represent systemic fragility (if you aren't ok with the former interpretation because you read neoliberalism connotations into it). Sweeping your concerns under the rug because you can let go of them, is letting the perpetrators to continue without their skin in the game of others. By ignoring harm done to you, you allow harm to perpetuate in society. You become thus complicit in its concealment.

When one lacks practical knowledge to address their concerns, one doesn't attain self-reliance, and when self-reliance is lacking, falling victim to others' opinions in inevitable. **One must therefore acquire self-sufficiency prior to deciding to follow Stoicism – if the latter is at all considered**. Breaking from travelator – if one has already worked oneself onto it – requires learning to pursue what is

not easy attained, an unfulfilled necessity one no longer writes off. The foremost danger is not in opinion, but in reification and in physical dependence on others. To recognize failure in relevant pursuit, is to stay true to reality, whereas to attribute failure to one's incompetence that will persist no matter what one does, is a reification, and a self-defeating, fatalistic attitude. And when one lacks self-reliance, freedom from opinion achieves nothing, for one is even less free when he is physically dependent on others than when he is concerned with their attitude. Nor should one completely ignore attitude of others and allow them to persist in defamation, treating social reputation as irrelevant concern. That is, the actual instruction is: don't adopt reification out of impotence (be that reification a product of your own thought or opinion of others), that when you receive pushback from fate you become more susceptible to making bad decisions, and that being dependent on others makes you very fragile and that the priority is get out of this predicament – in the latter situation especially the damage is done at faster pace then careful self-reflection could eliminate misguiding opinions you absorb.

Saying this, I don't rule out that a scholar of Stoicism – by necessity he must also be a scholar both in Greek and Latin – or a very experienced person, might find Stoicism agreeable and good instruction. Whereas a young person beginning their journey through adulthood, will not, per my assertion, benefit as much, and if they are unfortunate enough to struggle and be pushed by their helplessness into extensive self-reflection, they may even be harmed by it. Stoicism is not fit for everyone, not because it is a privileged discipline, but because it is an idea that easily bends, and only those who attained practical wisdom and “fuck you money” (in Taleb speak), bend it the correct way and so can entertain it all they want.

The following must be emphasised then: **the key aspect with worry is not worry itself, but behavior one may engage to cope with it: reaching out to wrong people, to wrong places**. Here wrong people doesn't imply criminals and addicts – it also means expecting sympathy and soliciting help from people who don't care about you. This instruction is against placing hope in other people or in expecting external circumstances to become favorable. But the worrying itself, is not something to stop doing – what is relevant, must stay relevant, but be careful as how you *react* to it. The reaction to worry can be problematic, the worry itself never is irrelevant. When people struggle, they tend to extensively engage in reification and try all of sort of bad ideas.

Therefore, the correct response to grief is to suspend action until the course becomes clear, for initial ideas as to how to address it can be quite reckless. In

this context, to suspend action means also NOT reaching out to people with whom you are not close (blood relatives are not necessary close, unfortunately), and if the cause of grief is something other than bereavement it might be prudent to not reach out to anyone at all. **The first thing to avoid in grief, is acting under haste**. This is done by invoking temperance, and only then fortitude – to avoid vane courage and bravado. If you choose incorrect goal, you are going to spend effort in that wrong direction. My personal mistake of this kind was seeking recompense in manipulating other people, which though was successful, did so at the expense of others, and this dishonest diplomacy was draining, for it required much attendance that was then needed elsewhere. It seems then that with grief, Nature intends us to take a pause: our previous conceptions failed and further errors are likely. One needs to rethink their strategy, rather than act tactically and impulsively – and we do want to address grief after all. If it is transformed from limerence via lost hope, don't blame yourself for not ending limerence before it turned into grief: these transitions can be quite sudden and soon, but avoiding placing trust into anything at all is impossible.

Continuing with the criticism, that which is rendered as “stoicism” (small letter) among mundane society is a gross perversion advocating for passive tolerance of suffering and acceptance of status quo, as well it seems that Stoicism became credited with inspiration for cognitive-behavior therapy, which scam was further given scientistic credit as a “proven” talk therapy. However, **cognition is not everything: you must develop practical skills to navigate reality and solve practical problems**. And because of what plebal brand of “stoicism” is, I long assumed that serenity prayer was written by one of Stoics, before checking the historical accounts of how recent this serenity prayer is and that it is primary associated with Alcoholic Anonymous. This fact-checking was done in the process of writing this very guide. It might be, of course, that they were conflated in my country of origin precisely, with the prevalence of fatalism and religious undertones of accepting “powers that be” and that “there got to be an authority thus you must respect every existing authority figure” nonsense that ex-Soviet countries are infested with.

Among ideas of Taleb about how the future might look, I care only about de-centralization and going back to city-states instead of nation-states. I don't care for preservation of capitalism and thus for his sentiment about ‘entrepreneurs’ – and by this I don't mean that I desire communism or some other degeneracy. Rather, I perceive it this way: the only good things capitalism results in, come from where it just happens to have skin in the game, and where skin in the game is absent, capitalism does not result in anything good. And if skin in the game –

the epistemology most robust next to directly undergoing survival razor – results in the world sorting out itself, it will take the humanity beyond any engineered solution. The question becomes then, how to get skin in the game to take hold of the world. In meanwhile, you may elect a personal objective to get yourself where you can aid its success, and get to self-sufficiency otherwise so your judgment is not clouded by dependence on others.

Is there any value system to aid such quest? In next part, I put forward my proposal.

VI. Razor of relevance and survivalist virtues

This is the way forward that avoids contrarianism: through recognition of what is relevant in real-world, pure practical knowledge, then deriving the new pivot points from that practical knowledge. The result is a razor – razor of relevance – to judge any moral maxims and propositions, whatever their source.

The razor of relevance is about dismissing irrelevant concerns and harmful guidance, by placing them in context of "what works and what doesn't". The same approach was behind the principle of no blaming, and the unnamed formula about shedding irrelevant concerns by not letting others tamper with your judgment, in previous section ("A broken discernment…"). Whereas the unnamed razor only applied to narrow problem-solving, the new razor, razor of relevance, identifies what is relevant in life in general. The resulting razor is presented as its own maxims – the list of maxims you will find below – each maxim accompanied by either 1) false dichotomy it counters 2) a problem it addresses 3) a topic to which it constitutes a rather non-trivial observation. The list should not be regarded as exhaustive: I wrote down what I could remember, but more insight can be potentially obtained and then conveyed via the same razor approach.

The maxims that comprise the razor of relevance were derived from experience, the kind which anyone can acquire for themselves, provided they follow my suggestions about learning from adversity. For those so daring, these form preliminary suggestions – something to be used before experience, possibly disregarding some of the points, and then, having learned from adversity, one refines or replaces them. It is not demanded of you to agree with every single of these points: do exercise your own judgment, form your own conclusions, test their practicality.

- **Relevant concerns of daily life are: pursuit of strategic gain, avoidance of fragility. Temperance is the guide**

(Re: the false dichotomy between pleasure and pain, or happiness and unhappiness)

A wise person is one who manages to avoid ruin, and thus thinks strategically. This doesn't mean, however, that wise is risk-averse: taking some risks is justified (indeed necessary for glory), just not those which lead to ruin. Since foreseeing outcomes is impossible even for the wisest mortals, the heuristic that is practical is one of not making oneself more fragile. This is what, per my definition, is meant by temperance. Thus one doesn't seek pleasure to oneself at unwise a cost, nor does one strain oneself so far that one's stature is compromised. And if less is sufficient, then it is often preferable to more, and to pursue more is excessive and unwise: this consideration is called restraint. Example: a rich man purchasing an expensive watch could be justified from hedonistic perspective as promoting both his and seller's pleasure, it is not, however, so when temperance is considered a virtue. The motive that would nudge rich man towards non-essential, but pleasant purchase, is one of vanity, and vanity is one form of unrestraint, or lack of temperance. It is not necessary that such purchase would be much – alone that it is redundant would be charge against it.

Since survival and making a distinction are the primary goals, what is foolish is defined by subsuming all pursuits under some goal that was supposed to be merely instrumental in pursuit of those. Pleasure and (aversion of) pain are instrumental, and they are taken care of by instincts, conscious consideration of them as ends is thus a folly. Vanity differs from glory (making a distinction) through absence of striving for the claim: vanity is trying to make up for the lack of real attainment. On the other hand, physical exercise, competitions and pursuit of heavily contested offices are not excessive enterprises, if done for the sake of making a distinction – for they are how one defines making a distinction and are thus primary, rather than instrumental, goal. In fact it is difficult to persist in those pursuits for any other purpose: if one tries to exercise instead for pleasure or even good health, while having no dreams to fulfil and taking no pride in their level of prowess, they will soon give up. And those who want to do so because of someone else's opinion, will not even start.

- **Incompetent can do no positive contribution and must stay out of the way**

  (Re: futile sacrifices and abstinence)

In general the less interventions the better, and working against one's own "desires" wouldn't magically make the world a better place. Intent cannot positively justify action if there is ignorance of fragility that results from such interference, for where fragility is introduced, there is damage. If one has acted in ignorance of concerns about fragility, then one has acted recklessly, and it is this recklessness that must be weighted into judgment, not intentions. This holds true even if directly observable negative consequences have not yet materialized. While some interventions are inevitable in society, it is mandatory that 1) they are kept to a minimum 2) the remaining necessary interferences are all checked by skin in the game.

Frugality for the purpose of self-discipline (increasing the command of reason over body) can be justified, so long as it does not compromise one's strength and vitality – doesn't make one fragile but moves one toward antifragility. Thus there can be prudent frugality, but also imprudent frugality.

- **Survivalism and interests of society coincide, and pursuit of what is best for one may give rise to even greater benefits for entire humanity**

  (Re: the selfish vs selfless false dichotomy)

  Personal necessity is the mother of the most useful inventions. Linus Torvalds has made world's most remarkable software – Linux the kernel, and distributed versioned system called "git" (used for software development) – for his own use at first. Meanwhile, theorized crap supposed to benefit others, results in stillborn projects. When you do good for yourself first and foremost, you come up with working things, and if it works for you, there will be someone else whom it may benefit, even if will not benefit everyone. High competition (where there is no monopoly nor oligopoly) in capitalism has proven to turn *some* selfish pursuits into collective gain. This shall not be mistaken for "capitalism is good", for it is actually skin in the game and the practice of "dogfooding" (using what you make) that gives such results, but results have been observed thus in the wild, where personal gain coincides with collective gain. The dichotomy of selfish vs selfless is thus false, for selflessness may not result in positive contributions and unsolicited help may even do harm, whereas solutions that were used for oneself have proved usefulness and thus have a better chance to be useful to others.

  On to survivalism. If you believe in natural rights, the answer is settled. If not, there are second-order consequences of the person forfeiting their own defense, which allows the violating party to gain at expense of society, by foregoing

morality and leeching antifragility of others. Thus it is necessary to put up resistance, and even down the parasite, if possible. Doing so will be to the benefit of society and not just your own. Guilty plea deals, for example, are cheating society of the right to know the truth, especially in sham "terrorist" trials. One allows the prosecutor to succeed without challenge to their claims. This is treachery: the interests of society are betrayed, especially if uncontested "evidence" one resigned to via plea deal is allowed to be used as proven in any other trial. Nothing is proven if there was no contest – it must not be allowed to set a precedent. Thus once again one harms society by foregoing self-defense. And let's not pretend that "national security exceptions" are society's interests – they are but a sophistry. Corrupt scum likes to justify their policies in the name of collective, because "collective opinion" is not something that can be immediately probed, and what can at all get probed is what people dare to speak about rather than how they are really affected. Even then, good luck accessing untampered statistics: most of those surveys are published to shape opinion not to declare real extant one. Skin in the game, and people standing up for what is moral, are the only way out of this.

- **Because it is best that tasks are delegated according to competence, it is also necessary that people can rely on each other, which can only be achieved if everyone respects and upholds their duties to others**

  (Re: on duty and division of responsibilities, and against atomicism of modernity)

  The view of some people that they respond only to authority (such as their employer or "boss") but not to their coworkers is despicable. Everyone should be preoccupied with tasks they are best fit for, instead of covering for some recklessly negligent idiot because the better people wouldn't be inclined to let the ship sink. People with elevated sense of responsibility should be respected, including by not placing any extra burden on them by slacking at one's own responsibilities.

  For society originates from understanding that no one has all the skills (or time to exercise them all), and others have important skills one doesn't have. Multi-tasking is really rapid task-switching, which is detrimental to all tasks engaged. Thus skilled people shall be unburdened from petty concerns. This is best achieved by everyone doing their part, and ideally only their part, yet some parts one must do are due to others, and not to some mundane, opinionated authority. The ideal separation of duties is not always possible, for sometimes one must cover for those who fell ill, or absented themselves –

but the community must endure – yet if one is being abused by having all the heap of responsibility shifted onto him, that person has the moral right to pursue vengeance. For my understanding of responsibility arises from the virtue of justice, and not from people-pleasing.

- **Situational awareness is incompatible with the concept of sin, and many great achievements are inaccessible to those who shun malevolence**

  (Re: discipline of sin, and the practice of confession)

  Sin is accusation on character, rather than of specific deed, hence not practically oriented. It is also a reification, and accordingly trains the accused to be self-obsessed, neurotic, ineffective. Furthermore, sin was observed to promote remorse but not to prevent actions one is by nature inclined towards. Futile are attempts of Christian clergy to vow celibacy, as they all invariably have to resort to homosexual practices and child molestation. For chronic or intense shame over one's innate nature, results in developing perversions. This is actually universal and applies to all forms of shame, not just sexual repression. The combination of helplessness + being shamed leads to development of perversion, a compulsive fetish, something one loathes but helplessly pursues, like if he was possessed by some force external to his will. It also forms a hard-to-break feedback loop.

  If one didn't acquire moral instruction, shaming them won't be a permanent solution. They will act up when their ego is high, deprecate themselves when it is low. I once encountered such individual online, he was Jewish, and was chronically ego-tripping. He could only interpret rebukes as being denied status and recognition he aspired to, which would cause him to fold (temporarily only), but he never could understand that people asked him not to do specific things: thing which go against established rules and customs of community.

  Inability to contain private matters is a mark of a diseased mind. It is especially stupid to share (or obsess over) one's thoughts that were not acted upon. Only actions matter, whereas thoughts that were entertained but dismissed don't – or they could have been even a necessary intermediate step in reaching better judgment. As such, to color intermediate thoughts is mere speculation, and to mess with them an outright hazard, because can break that which makes thing work in first place – our knowledge of causation is always incomplete. In particular, friends are often made from rivals, rather than evolve from initial rose-blinded admiration. Similarly, people-pleasers are not posed to

make great contributions even if they dream of making (or becoming) a great sacrifice. It takes aptitude to reach greatness, which aptitude comes from confronting and solving personally relevant challenges, and it takes defiance against adversaries in order not to succumb, in the moment of despair, to sirens singing of failure.

- **Seeking others has disastrous outcomes when one lacks self-reliance; private contemplation is beneficial to some people – in moderation**

  (Re: on choice between being with community and voluntary exile)

  Temporary withdrawal can help escape illusions fostered by dialectics of conflict, but one doesn't learn how to live in community during times of his exile. If one indeed finds himself developing anger, prejudice, extreme judgment – it may be beneficial to put distance between himself and others until he is able to obtain better judgment. However, it is necessary to watch out for when the problem is with the community indeed. Going by my own experience, the damage for mingling with wrong crowds out of necessity can be significant. Good communities I found by voluntary choice and a very lucky stumbling upon. I infer that dependence makes stay in wrong places, whereas self-sufficiency allows to find good places by elimination of – quick departure from – bad ones. Also, what I sought out when I was needy (let's not sugarcoat things), I didn't get, and had to survive on my own anyway, completely by myself. The scenario I presumed community would be necessary to get assistance from, never materialized.

  Don't bother changing for the sake of other people, especially if they give no feedback or keep changing reasons. Societies operate per “like attracts the like” principle – dissidents wash out, or community suffers one schism after another and falls apart. Which means if you run into an asshole within community, you either run into entire community of assholes, or the community lacks filter. Both cases mean you best leave. If you think the fault is with you still, you are not going to discover what you were doing wrong by alleging causality anyway. Seek only such change that is profitable to yourself.

- **There are positive variants of individualism and collectivism, and there are negative ones. Individualism and collectivism also do not preclude each other**

  (Re: the false dichotomy between “individualism” and “collectivism”)

The negative variants are those built on tendencies that hide (or make impossible to reveal) fragility within existing practices. These harmful tendencies are as follows: atomicity, authority pleasing, flexing by those in position of authority, sycophancy, favoritism, “shooting the messenger”, resentment towards whistleblowers, and other depraved attitudes of the “don't stand out against collective or powers that be” kind. Furthermore, there are problem-solvers, and then there are party-makers, and so there is collectivism that is about survival and justice, and there is one about role-playing. These never coincide in one person, and when problem-solvers get together, there is already a team without the need for team-building, just like no amount of team-building will make a team out of party-makers.

Cooperation and rivalry aren't mutually exclusive. The key to making collective ruthlessly efficient is to exploit natural tendencies towards rivalry, yet curtail the more dangerous aspects of animosity and envy. In workplace environment, this entails praising only work-related achievements (never those outside of work) but avoiding patting the workers on their head for any other reason – in other words, you must avoid fostering fatalist perception that skill and commitment can be beaten by status. This is because status-masturbating work environments amplify fragility from any negative attitudes coworkers develop towards each other, what's more, in such environments the growth of animosity is irreversible. Educational background for this purpose qualifies as out-of-work achievement – one to be silent about, just as all that pertains to salary shall all be discussed strictly behind closed doors in one-on-one setting. As per all other interaction between employees, the supreme rule about salaries, education, etc. is “Don't ask, don't tell”. For where does beneficial rivalry come from? From employees that naturally have “git gud” mentality and don't care for rank or educational background, only who gets shit done and who seek to be the best at it. When that is matched by sense of responsibility, the team emerges around them organically, comprising of other people with the sense of responsibility (though not necessary the same competitive attitude). So the idea is to emphasis “git gud”, the internal competition over skill, and remove all obstacles to it – to create work environment that honors people with skill-centric mentality above all others. Whenever “can't benefit everyone” situation arises and choice must be made, to these people shall go “the best cuts of meat”, and to the rest shall go the leftovers.

- **In responding to wrongdoing, the relevant concerns are plural and pertain to both society (justice) and individual (self-determination, strategic**

vision). Justice rules out forgiveness, self-determination places limit on when is appropriate opportunity for exacting vengeance.

(Re: the false dichotomy between forgiveness and vengeance)

Since transgression allows one to gain at the expense of another and thus bypass and undermine honest ways of acquiring benefits, neither immoral nor unlawful acts shall ever be regarded as solely private matters. There is a social aspect of necessarily punishing the criminal, and to wave it away is to deny society what it is due to it. Debt forgiveness, and this attitude of normalizing debts rather than regarding borrowing them as an act of desperate, weak-willed people, has made world fragile: by enabling war campaigns to be conducted (such as infamous War on Terror) on borrowed money, by throwing money at experimental projects such as encouraging diversity over competence, and so on. Forgiveness in general shall be reserved between friends, when there is factual established reciprocity. But to forgive strangers is to encourage recklessness and thus undermine the contributions of honest people and the concept of honesty itself.

The relation between vengeance and vindication depends on customs of society. In society where personally avenging oneself (e.g. in a duel) is a sign of strength, and not doing so is a sign of weakness, vengeance would indeed confer vindication. Unfortunately, we do not live in such a society. The conclusion of pursuit of vindication being delayed, it is important for it not get in a way of important life goals. The prerogative shall be get stronger, eliminate your fragility, pursue overall resourcefulness. Don't focus narrowly on that which would enable to collect vengeance sooner – the skills and status you acquire must be beneficial to you even past the fulfilment of vengeance. Having got your affairs in order, seize the opportunity to collect vengeance when it passes by: precisely when you are strong, and your opponent is weak. Whether this state of affairs is already in itself vindicating you, is up to you – I personally don't pursue vengeance any further against those already squashed by fate.

Also, from the fact that is vindication that is truly pursued, while vengeance is only means to attain it, “not forgiving” can only ever be concern if you give an ear to those who insist on forgiveness. The problem with these treacherous “advisors” is they are not vindicating you. So you must first free yourself from influence of these people – once again, pursue resourcefulness to put distance between you and them. If you are in position to threaten estrangement, do so – provided you have the guts to follow up on the threat and do it for

real. Be realistic in this assessment, however: being in position to threaten estrangement implies they are dependent on you and you are NOT dependent on them.

- **Sympathy is tangential to morality: its proper domain is consolation of close friends in grief (never strangers), and aesthetic expression through arts**

  (Re: on compassion, solidarity and trust)

  Human is specifically a tribal animal, not a blanket social one – the interests of one's tribe comes first, that of rest of humanity second. You are not supposed (by Nature) to be sympathetic towards anyone outside your tribe, nor asympathetic towards your tribe members. In dealings with strangers, you shall be cautious instead, and ready to handle the threat if it emerges, otherwise acting in cold, rational manner. To our instincts, sympathy from stranger is an unconscious red flag. Only through capitalist grooming do we come to suppress this realization – to chase it away from consciousness – but it does not really go away on subliminal level. Sympathy is appropriate for consolation of friends in grief – friends only, not strangers, not coworkers, not other role-based communications. Additionally, consolation, exchange of what bothers one requires strictly real-time communication. Don't cope with loneliness by reaching out to strangers, or going to forums, etc. If you can engage others for other reasons – do engage them, but don't expect to cover for lack of sympathy that way, and if that is sole reason – then desist, for your own sake (has nothing to do with not emburdening others). Reaching for people who give you fake sympathy is worse than being alone and experiencing no sympathy whatsoever – when weak or disadvantaged, you shall pursue resourcefulness, not expose yourself to exploitation.

  “Undeguld des Herzens” (literally “The Heart's Impatience”) – a 1939 novel by Stefan Zweig, an Austrian writer – is the best metaphor for what sympathy really is, and how it is (at least outside of strongly established bonds) not reliable. Because sympathy is about feelings, it is not conducive to commitment, and cannot be molded to be so. Just like pleasure, sympathy is not only transient – hence you won't build anything sustainable on it – but also a pendulum. This means excess transforms it into its opposite: e.g. cruelty. Compassion is a misleading word – it is either sympathy or justice, the former implies bias, the latter implies absence of it. In pursuit of justice, reason is engaged, as such this pursuit has strategic quality of self-consistency that acts done out of sympathy do not.

Verbal consolation notwithstanding, sympathy is not supposed to be pity either – it is supposed to reflect one's preference (hence bias I have talked of earlier, when contrasting it to justice). I've observed that those who make compassion into their goal erase that discernment which is the basis of healthy aesthetic. For aesthetic discernment is inherently discriminatory, imposing predicates such as “beautiful” and “ugly”, “magnificent” and “sloppy”; yet they have perverted it to justify mediocrity and primitivity. Artwork done by those who are into pity is contemptible (the entirety of Christian-themed shit), even more so when it is done explicitly for the sake of virtue-signaling (cue mods in any games modding community that is plagued by diversity apologists) i.e. is trying to conceptualize some message rather than engage intrinsic intuition about what is beautiful and strong.

Don't get fooled into solidarity also. Solidarity is neither substitute nor means to justice: for solidarity implies alliance with incompetent also, and trust in some leader. Historical consequences of such blind trust were dire. Indeed, since solidarity is built on reified abstraction, some cause to be loyal to, it is involved in power transfer – in transfer of antifragility – it has “useds” and “beneficiaries”, it exploits the ambivalence of social connections (member of a tribe vs ‘member’ of a group identity) to feel like you are getting something from it, but you don't, unless you are the one power is transferred to or you factually establish personal connections with a few people who are also coincidentally involved in the movement. In the latter case, these kind of connections warrant much scrutiny, for whether these individuals stay with you where their personal views evolve and neither of you engage with activist movement anymore, or whether they choose group over you still.

- **When confronted by insurmountable treachery, invoke temperance, then fortitude (in this order): instruct yourself not to abandon the quest for justice but focus on what you excel at doing in meanwhile**

  (Note: this guidance is very different from the serenity prayer, as it does not endorse nor otherwise imply resignation, but rather cautions against haste)

  Temperance here refers to being necessary selective about pursuits, without which selectivity fortitude may get applied in pursuit of an ill-chosen goal. The instruction is to first wait for anger, and extreme yearnings, to dissolve; *afterwards* go by one's talents, and thus apply yourself effectively for where you can achieve most. This is a quite specific instruction: it directly answers what one must do, or on the contrary, refrain from doing.

To refrain from doing anything that is not your talent – when going through rough times – is an important part. Certain calls which are contrary to your ability, or might hinder exercise of it, they are best not answered, even if you would be in some limited manner capable to spend some effort there. Don't waste yourself over nothing, leave those other calls to who can put themselves to no better uses. Pursue resourcefulness rather than act prematurely. There is a caveat that one's talents and limitations better be discovered beforehand, but this can only be done during times less perilous: by taking on challenges yet taking care to avoid ruin. Otherwise you will have to make do with what you think is your talent – hopefully you can still distinguish it from things others forced you to prove.

As for serenity prayer, its history appears to be rather recent, only reliably tracing back to 20th century and taken most fondly by Alcoholics Anonymous. However, I've encountered its use to shame down activists or other people who aren't content with things they are, hence its necessary to remind that serenity prayer is written by losers, for losers. My practical experience resulted in the following guideline: necessary follow your talents, but don't lose track of what you hold relevant – to recognize when circumstances are favorable and you are resourceful to make things as they ought to be.

- **Don't submit, but also don't be rush: it's foolish to chase death**

  (Re: defending your ideals to the death vs pursuit of martyrdom)

  Don't betray your cause by aiding that of the enemy – again, this instruction is precise, for history knows examples of when those who failed to commit honorable suicide (Japanese during World War II), have in aftermath accepted the conversion because of nice treatment by their captors and perception of being alienated from their former culture. Were they instead practical – rather than focusing on image – they would still recognize their imperative not to assist their captors. Also, don't walk into a capture just to show willingness to die for your beliefs as if it were somehow a substitute for their success (e.g. don't do what Navalny did). Or worse yet, because of vanity. This is actually related to previous maxim: necessary it is to recognize what is proper aim and not to act on it prematurely and out of desperation if direct attainment is of yet impossible. Pause and think what would be a rational pursuit, don't commit yourself to irrational ones. Do notice when lying to adversary won't involve betrayal of anyone, and thus do lie if that can facilitate escape or allow to infiltrate ranks of the enemy.

Martyrs don't achieve as much as those who are practical, worse yet, the former are never guaranteed to achieve anything but only on a whim of fate and when they have sympathy of those who have leverage. With no leverage on sympathizers' behalf, no attainment results from martyrdom, no matter what their (sympathizers) numbers. The stories of successful martyrs and peaceful country-wide protests resulting in government change are examples of survivorship bias. The stars may have aligned in a select few cases which thus became memorable, but history knew a very good counter to it for a long time: employing mercenaries to crush down opposition, as for mercenaries citizens are not kin. Usually, state must be broke in order to collapse, for a state that can pay can always rely: 1) on those who won't survive under any other authority, and 2) on mercenaries.

- **Happiness is neither people's true goal, nor what sustains society. The latter is best achieved through "skin in the game", the former is best left for individuals to determine.**

  (Re: utilitarianism)

  "The real world relies on the intelligence of antifragility, but no university would swallow that—just as interventionists don't accept that things can improve without their intervention." (c) Taleb, "Antifragile". Utilitarianism is, in essence, helicopter parenting of citizens by government. Evolutionary mechanisms guarantee that when one is taken care of, they lose skills to take care of themselves, because it is no longer relevant to their survival. People must learn to fend for themselves: a good parent is one that ensures their child grows up into a self-sufficient adult. Mathematical models tend to fall apart when they implemented in reality – because they miss relevant things – and the quantization of good is practically impossible. Pleasure is of instrumental value: it is not a metric to optimize for, but an instinctive guide to counter excesses of reason, which works in so far as one's pleasure is only attained through one's own personal action and not in any other way.

  The actual thing we should maximize is everyone's agency over their own destiny – their own and no one else's – not in utilitarian sense of "greatest agency for greatest numbers", but precisely removing as much obstacles collective places on individual as possible, except where it is necessary to defend any individual from being subdued by any other – that is, precisely as in Kant's rendering of legal maxim attributed to Ulpian. However, we must acknowledge that *some* interventions, are necessary for the society to persist, yet our predictive power about outcomes of any intervention isn't godlike

and will never be. I believe that “skin in the game” will provide the best epistemology we can get and help stop bad solutions early rather than let them propagate, as well as it will discourage recklessness. It will also guide people to adopt fair ways of dealing with others – because these fair ways will be beneficial, whereas unfair ones will not.

It is notable that French resisted the degeneracy of utilitarianism – because they learned from Revolution and especially from Terror, as one learns from adversity. The rejection of utilitarianism is evidenced, for example, in existence of “Mouvement anti-utilitariste dans les sciences sociales”, and is also discussed in academic circles outside France, cue the following work: “Welch, Cheryl B. 2012. ‘Anti-Benthamism’: Utilitarianism and the French Liberal Tradition. In French Liberalism from Montesquieu to the Present Day, ed. Raf Geenens and Helena Rosenblatt, 134-151. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.” The work mentioned does provide rare exceptions to the exclusion of utilitarianism from relevant discourses in France, but the general trend towards exclusion only gains credibility from obscurity of these examples.

- **Individual agency is paramount to integrity of mind and making wise decisions.**

  (Re: the extremes of pro-life and of justifying suicidal thoughts)

  Impotence serves a breeding ground for reifications of the worst kind – the ones used for cope rather than to make sense of the world in a practical way. I have also observed that unwanted children have unlucky fate – mothers will treat them with scorn their entire life, and I am not even talking about “one considered abortion but was talked out of it”. Its rather that tales about parental love are that, fairy tales, and parents like to screw over those who don't live up to their expectations, and especially those whom they didn't expect to conceive at all. The generation after generation is fucked in aftermath. And since those from these families have damaged character, they are particular susceptible to grow up as outcasts, lose moral compass, and subsequently commit a violent crime. So much for “lets ban abortions and have more children”, ha?

  Those who spread horror stories about population decline tend to be ignorant about damage to ecosystem done by industrial society. There is no point in engaging them in debate – those who do not respect Nature should not even call themselves “pro-life” in first place. Now as for Nietzsche's naive romanticism of “suicidal thoughts being a means to get through many a dark

night". The only uplifting component actually comes from feeling agency – having a choice whether to die or continue living – but there is a very important practical downside of not planning life that will go on after you change your mind. Of not striving for resourcefulness, and just going "ah, I may just bail out of life and then have nothing to care about" escapism. Neither there is anything cool about coping through love, unrequited or otherwise. Coping against persistent adversity through love is a sign of travelator mentality, ditto with contemplating suicide without envisioning life past one's projected end.

- **To prevent past mistakes would be to also part with wisdom; don't waste time imagining impossible, take care of your future, employ whatever upside you got in order to do so**

  (Re: on fate, adversity and lamentation)

  It is possible that mistakes one did in regards to his/her own life – especially those which resulted in irreversible consequences that won't let go – may be what makes one learn and develop character in first place. It is certainly true in regards to myself, and it also enabled me to contrast times when things worked with times they didn't – and produce knowledge such as in regards to akrateia. In this way, I have profited very much from misfortune, and from not always acting wise, to learn what is practically relevant. So this is my via negativa rendering of amor fati: love thy mistakes and don't seek to go back and change the past. Take the "I regret nothing" stance – fate has set you up for learning, make sure to get most of it. Also, never ever resent your willful decisions that only affected you – own every single one of them.

  It also seems one has a better learning ability when she is young than when she is old. How far you get during youth, in essence, determines whether you will grow wise when you get old, or whether you will only get old. Wisdom comes from recognition of what is relevant via real-life experiences (this is taught directly by adversity, but as one grows old you become less flexible in regards to revisiting assumptions re what is relevant), and figuring out how to address that relevance (it is on you to find those still). So, wisdom is not – plain cannot be – taught at university, and pursuit of education over experience can even hinder its acquisition. But you do need social opportunities that only come with having a degree, so per Taleb's advice in "Antifragile", get passing grades, and, both in meanwhile and afterwards, pursue challenges on your own.

In likewise manner (that is, through experience), I discerned a few virtues to complement those I borrowed from classical philosophy: virtues that can strengthen

one to withstand, and even benefit from, unpredictability of life and also machinations of others. Through the further suggestions reader will find below, personal antifragility can be achieved without turning one's back to society, while at the same time requiring no amendment under extreme, survival situations and when engaging adversaries. To cardinal virtues, I therefore add these:

- **self-honesty**. To distinguish clearly what one knows from what one doesn't know (rumors or news fall into the latter category), and thus also reject social narratives and convenient explanations. This distinction is to be respected in action also: “I should have done” fallacy, excuses and talking about plans (sans making promises one is then obligated to uphold) qualify as talking about what one doesn't know. See also types of self-reflection and their limitations in part II.

- **non-pretentiousness**. A non-vulgar, restrained behavior, and a strict imperative against vanity. Compatible with deception and concealment when their purpose has nothing to do with vanity, and doesn't imply humbleness nor humility. Implies awareness of consequences if asked an expert opinion, and thus not making statements that are convenient to image (even if they are expected or demanded) yet extend beyond boundaries of knowledge one has, or would harm interests of any members of society.

- **self-reliance**. No blind trust in anyone, and no placing hope in external circumstances to change while one sits around doing nothing. Tasks can be delegated but one is not ignorant of fragility that results from doing so, and is particularly aware of tail risk (does not trust doctors to evaluate risk for them, for example). Delegation of responsibility thus implies one identified and consciously accepted risk, or prepared a contingency. Self-sufficiency is perfection of this virtue.

- **integrity**. Owning the consequences of one's willed actions, and not wishing others interfered even if consequences were negative. Not throwing accusations against fate, and respecting one's solitude even if it is involuntary – the path of exile or misfortune being preferred over mediocrity and conformity. The most healthy attitude towards uncertainty of life and the boundaries of epistemology: anything and everything may later be proven to have been a “bad idea”, thus what matters is self-determination.

- **defiance**. Upholding one's dignity against all others, and striving in the face of adversity and opposition. Not to be confused with being contrarian or anti-

social, nor petty animosity – doesn't let small concerns and adversaries hijack one's worldview. Exoteric expression of esoteric pattern called perseverance.

These virtues taken together along with cardinal virtues thus constitute "**Nine Survivalist Virtues**", the full list given as follows: **practical wisdom, justice, temperance, fortitude, self-honesty, non-pretentiousness, self-reliance, integrity, defiance**. The list reflects what I found in practice to predicate both survival and learning from adversity – hence survivalist, because antifragility – consequently, it neither should be shortened, nor should one add to them without serious evidence that their additions promote survivalism in manner compatible with morality. It's important that before incorporating any more virtues one first proves universal applicability of their proposed additions, even if they may wish that certain examples of honor were adhered to by all: one such example being dependability (or reliability), where upholding duty towards those who are not fair is problematic, because reduces one to instrument of harm they (the unfair ones) do to others. Reliability shall have teeth – it shall respect its own worth, otherwise it degenerates to servility. And servility is not a virtue, but a definite vice.

Most importantly, making reliability a virtue (in context of social unrest rather than of healthy society) would invite the error of expecting reliability from people we hold in high esteem, or when we could use a helping hand. Thus only self-sustaining virtues were included in the above list. The project of future society will necessarily have reliability as a virtue: the way to enforce it as a virtue no one can neglect would be through universal adoption of skin in the game. Until then, survivalist virtues is how we persevere on our own. They do not obsolete other concerns thus – such as those presented earlier under razor of relevance, or in timeless works such as "De Officiis" by Cicero. These virtues can carry one through darkest times: where others would have made exceptions from their moral code, and when one can't convince or otherwise coerce others to act in true interests of society. People following other moral codes are often inclined to suspend them under duress in order to survive, yet mine neither requires nor allows such suspension. It defines the irreducible minimum of virtuous (and at the same time, effective and practical) conduct that is never repealed, whereas amongst the responsible part of society, further obligations do exist – they follow from virtue of justice.

Against reducing cardinal virtues to some singular virtue or just fewer number of virtues, I already spoke in part I of the current section "Self-determination and morality" that such theorizing does not lend itself to practice and thus is

not a subject of practical philosophy. It is easier to remember – and act upon – a conclusion than how it follows from original premises. The argument holds for the survivalist virtues also. For this reason, “pairs” such as self-honesty/non-pretentiousness and integrity/defiance are not merged, even if they can be derived from one another (integrity and defiance both describe one's relationship with fate).

VII. The Order of Nine Angles (O9A) and its influence on this work

This part of treatise was difficult to write. While I can't be certain about O9A's hidden agenda, it would not be fair to aid – however inadvertently – the dishonorable propaganda, the modern-days “witch hunt” perpetrated by Establishment against them. I also consider it necessary – consistent with what honor demands – to acknowledge the positive influence the published material of The Order of Nine Angles had on my life journey. Still, I pursue my own agenda here, rather than doing an impartial and authentic exposition of original. While giving O9A its due, the conclusions I made from my own experience have diverged from the source of inspiration significantly.

Indeed I must make it clear, that from the very beginning and through the present moment, I was never interested in joining any sort of collective or adopting other people values, nor even I sought any agreement in values. I have always looked and continue to look into O9A – just like into anything else – from a purely pragmatic perspective: digging available material for methods to borrow, to apply them towards my own ends. My original aim was that of exacting revenge, whereas the quest for individual development I saw as merely instrumental at the time: as in becoming resourceful, rising above others factually and not just in Occult terms. Over time, though, as some of my foes have fallen – whether because of curse cast or because of fate's judgment – I learned to appreciate self-development for its own sake, for

I realized vengeance can only be transient goal: once you have it, you still've got to pursue something, might as well think ahead and prep for it in advance.

So, the question is: "**Why O9A and not other movements within Occult/esotericism sphere?**". The answer lies in what distinguishes O9A from all other movements that claim to be esoteric or otherwise to be in possession of "secret" knowledge. In my search for genuine Occult knowledge, I used certain acid tests. First test I used is "the dynamite principle", or "malleability towards malice": the praxis must be capable of being used to harm others, or it is fake. For nothing practical in this world is harmless, but necessary is either inherently dangerous, contests what another seeks, or happens at another's expense. In regards to my methods, for example, the self-command that a person obtains over themselves does obstruct the goal of others who seek to gain advantage, or otherwise flies in the face of social norms. Nor is anything practical designed to only narrowly attain one goal and no other – whoever writes of practical things, enables rogue use of their methods, including necessary the possible use against their creator. The detailed exposition about how to obtain motivation to break out of limerence, inadvertently hints as to how affected individuals may be exploited and how to identify when they are particularly susceptible to exploitation. Second test is whether any secret knowledge that leaked, is anything that deserved to be secret in first place, that is, it was not published elsewhere in the public accessible domain, *and* reports a rather non-trivial observation. For I had prior experience with online forums, where certain ideas that were written in an invite-only section, would be discussed openly on some anonymous imageboard – not by the same people, but rather that there was nothing to justify such secrecy.

So I dug through leaks – pirated material – from organizations with (initiation) "degrees", and per these two filters can already rule out, for example, Temple of Set and The Dragon Rouge, nevermind others I can't even bother to remember. Did not find anything useful in the Temple of Set leaked materials, only ridiculous pseudo-intellectualism as well as proscription (done in typical pseudo-intellectual manner) in regards to any dealing with blood in magical rituals. Seems like adding knife play between consenting adults into your rituals would be considered problematic… knife play is a rather popular kink in Sapphic circles btw, to make 'sex magic' hotter. So we are not looking for anything physical and exciting in Temple of Set, there is only a search of Xeper drug (aka feeling 'inspired' by your own pseudo-intellectualism and thus believing one has become that true Self away from the crowd) – and if we were into intellectual masturbation and 'oh my insight' we could just as well turn to an older Zen-Buddhism tradition. Or Heidegger's approach to the authenticity problem and thus existential fulfillment

by doing things with actual impact in the real world, for that matter. The Dragon Rouge did at least have some interesting observations at entry-level, but not too deep (dressed in more esoteric lingo than necessary) and not enough past that. So, while the difficult Sevenfold Way did make me look sideways at times, the sideways were really not worth it.

Beside meeting my own criteria I described above, **O9A also offered unique, unparalleled perspective on women**: examples being the Rounwytha tradition, definition of term “muliebral” in “A Glossary of Order of Nine Angles Terms” (which is CC-BY-ND unfortunately, try “files/o9a/o9a-glossary-v7c.pdf” in universe archive I published), its claim of having Sapphic nexions, the strong female archetypes in The Deofel Quartet, and short texts of cunning women overpowering gullible men collected on “Sinister Vignettes” WordPress blog (also available in universe archive). A rather good source of inspiration, for someone looking to – for whatever reason, but usually because of past adversity – establish new identity around a personal moral code.

I really recommended to check out what is understood as muliebral by O9A (importantly, not by David Myatt) which is quite distinct from what it is regarded as feminine, as the former pertains to abilities, skills and qualities that positively distinguish women, whereas the latter is derogatory projections ascribed to ‘womanhood’ by men. Sadly, Myatt's own definition of muliebral is scarcely different from which is regarded as feminine – hence why I explicitly guide reader to O9A's and not Myatt's interpretation. However, as I said before, most of the text that follows will be just my takes on subject – I have since switched to my own weltanschauung, which is centered on Survivalist Virtues and perseverance.

The respect for women correlates with self-honesty: if one has condescending attitude towards women, it is indicative that this person lacks self-honesty, for he engages in projections (or if a she, then trusts narratives – causal abstractions, reifications – over her direct experience). Human's enjoyment of status and success is not dependent on sex – the only thing that can be different, are methods to these goals and social customs constraining such pursuits based on one's gender. “Myngath” itself – the autobiographical work of David Myatt – contains this elephant in the room: a snare, set up by Twinkle, which a certain rather gullible Myatt falls for, a snare so subtle it can compete with sinister tests in The Deofel Quartet for instructional value. I found it amusing how some anti-fascist – cannot be bothered to remember his name – called Myngath a story of Myatt's sexual exploits. Nothing can be further from truth, for if I see a single exploit there, that one belongs to Twinkle and her skillfully architectured snare. But of course,

terminally socialized[28] anti-fascists can't see reality as they are overwhelmed by narratives (by causal abstractions), in which women are weaker sex who "need" to be made equal to men and artificially "empowered" through legislation, affirmative action and quotas for positions of authority.

As seen in example of Twinkle coercing Myatt into adultery, women do just fine without copying men behavior and without occupying roles historically reserved for men ('girlboss' depravity): they can naturally outwit those men who fall for pleasure instinct and minute-considerations, as well as men who are otherwise inexperienced in negotiating the difficult side of relationships, *distracted*[29] as the latter sort of men are by works of Carl Jung, by seeking answers in archetypes and emulating role models, in developing empathy as a means to "balanced character", by (a rather stupid actually) idea of acting on the whim of compassion and immediacy of the moment, by chasing insight about acausal (enamoured by other-worldliness and by hubris of presuming to possess original insights that well-trained academics "missed": the 'Symbols and Being' work in Naos is plagiarized work of David Myatt if I recall correctly, just as is Star Game). Whereas practical wisdom requires **morals** (in this case, assertiveness in setting boundaries based on notions of duty), **life experience specifically relevant to the situation** (what is grief and how does one restore self-respect of another person when it is damaged, and especially when that person already sues for restitution through intending to take, by means of guile, what another has), and **directness**.

Forward with the answers, then. Per my understanding, society has as its foundation the notion of duty – of obligations owed: it is not founded on talking nice to each other, parroting what is "normal" or "fashionable". To utilitarian reasoning from "pleasure" and "happiness", this certitude represent impervious wall. Something that really makes a difference in this situation: where you to find yourself in place of Myatt, would you sacrifice K.'s wellbeing for the sake of your

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[28] The observation that 'leftist activists are oversocialized types' was made by Ted Kaczynski in his work "Industrial Society and Its Future" (repeated in his work "Technological Slavery"). This person and the work mentioned have nothing to do with O9A, but I consider this particular observation to be an esoteric gem: conscience of public opinion is impostor of morality.

[29] It is not wrong per se to study esotericism, ideas of Carl Jung and Heidegger and so on – the error is precisely when one overlooks other important concerns in life because of such study or the sense of achievement that comes with being a scholar, even if for real. Consider the distinction between "advancing towards enantiodromia" and "actually supporting your lover", "holding empathy as a virtue" and "recognizing and attending to another person's concerns in a manner that does not cause undue suffering to anyone and does not negate their agency".

(Myatt's) and Twinkle's wellbeing (for Myatt has fallen in love in Twinkle)? From utilitarian perspective, it is two persons vs one. From mine, it is a violation of those principles which make society endure – hence these principles being above my personal happiness and that of all others combined. The oath to uphold these principles, is in my heart. No intellectual sophistry can move these boundaries: shall the person insist on me being with them because "I actually am infatuated with them", they will still be denied what they covet. Shall they then think of me negatively, or even take their own life – good riddance. One must respect other's people agency: the decisions others make are not for anyone else to take responsibility for – these other people do have agency, can make decisions that are not for others to control, and per my moral code, to interfere with. This pertains to integrity – owning the consequences of your actions, as well as spares one god complex (no, you couldn't have prevented that person's suicide – they have chosen their fate of their own volition). And if you rather agree with utilitarian reasoning, Myngath holds a surprise for you: a poetic justice, on behalf of fate, to both Twinkle and Myatt – their relationship fell apart for reason similar to that which started it in first place.

So the boundaries are set then – if the person has ulterior motives, I am not going to give in to them even if that might cost me a friend. I am pretty experienced with not letting feelings override reason, as this guide makes quite evident. Travelling to the other person's home alone is a mistake – in Myatt's place, I would have preferred to make an arrangement on neutral territory, with my present lover also attending it, and we would have a conversation between three people. But suppose for the sake of further investigation – into consoling grieving friends – we keep things as they were. So you did travel to their home alone, seeing as you want to reduce the chance they *might* harm themselves, and you were afraid that alternate proposition would provoke them into recklessness. What do you understand about grief? It was not an easy insight for me to obtain – had to face grief many times before I could finally understand it. **Grief is when fate kicks you in the mouth – your plan has gone to shit.** Therefore, to help relieve someone else's grief is not to say to them they are grieving for nothing (and should therefore 'stop grieving') – but to **convince them that experiencing grief and misfortune is not their folly**.

It is not actually possible to never depend on anything – in a sense of never making the assertion that your home will be there, when you return, etc. Grief arrives when what was relevant to our plans, has been destroyed, and this does a blow to our own perception of our competence. It may be tempting then, for one experiencing grief, to either quickly find a substitute to what has been lost

(or hastily attempt to repair what got broken), or to restore one's self-image by proving said competence in something else. This something else, can be manipulation that cheats others of what is due to them, and if one won't let go of this little project when you tried to validate them, then, unfortunately, the extent of your control over the situation ends here. Haste provoked by seeking to immediately alleviate grief can precisely lead to such stubborn projects. A side observation: despite grief and limerence being both about very high relevance (and thus – in context of interpersonal relationships – also convertible between each other when hope is gained/lost), the solutions to be followed are not really the same. When managing our own grief, we must guard against haste first and foremost.

Crucial insight pertaining to validating others is to never make them feel small. One must convince them that experiencing setback does not diminish their real life competence. In respect of person grieving not as a result of bereavement, one may convince them that grieving over loss of something relevant and because of losing certainty in one's future, is as natural and therefore appropriate as in bereavement. Better yet, to reinstill hope about their future – but this harder objective requires one to be good at finding words. Even this can go wrong: when their understanding of what they are pursuing is distorted by reification, because of authority figures they had in life, rather than is direct understanding of themselves. For those who have understanding so distorted, this might fail and I do not have a backup for that. The commentary in example of “Ambivalence and akrateia” does have advice as to what to say in a situation similar to one described in Myngath. Could the person still disfriend one afterwards, because the schemer (the coveter) didn't win in their little game, with this stubborn attitude reinforced by the sense of entitlement that serving a meal – doing a favor – requires somehow a favor in return? Yes, and as I said per considerations of integrity, good riddance then – can't oblige someone so infantile.

Thus my conclusion that to avoid such snare, if one wants to also support a person at the same time, one ought to have moral command, with self-honesty – not presuming women to be ‘weaker’ or ‘tender’ sex to be talked down by a fatherly figure – integral part of practical morality. If you don't have it, then stay out. Observe, then, how morality and practical wisdom thus enable self-determination in this case, whereas empathy by itself would be able to do here what? Not much. Matters relevant in this case include: 1) recognizing what grief really is, because one had grappled with it before, after already becoming self-aware and thus not duped by authority (including by authority of Ancient Greek and Roman thoughts on subject) 2) how you can help another person restore their self-respect – and

even recognizing the necessity to do so in first place – and eliminating pretense that would damage it, whether such pretense comes from mundane, academic or even respectable ancient source 3) taking responsibility only for that part in which one truly can be responsible, and leaving other people to err where they have agency to do so. This is what I call practical wisdom indeed, and if you try to pose as authority figure to another person seeking validation, then you precisely don't yet have it, because such approach by its very nature obstructs the goal.

It was in fact another, more painful episode from Myngath, instrumental in discovery of truth about grief sans preconceptions, for it precisely made it impossible to be duped by ideas such as Chryssipus espoused (if we take account of him in Cicero's "Tusculanae Disputationes" as authoritative). Tempting it is, to look down on grief and limerence, to boldly scorn those experiencing these, by projecting one's own past helplessness onto people even potentially more competent for their age than the one so projecting was (or is, as tends to happen in real-life). Doing so when outside said experience, is actually cope – a soothing illusion of one's own superiority. That one feels differently about these aspects of life when they are not presently enduring them, doesn't mean that such seasons can be thrown away from life. In practical philosophy, "he is wise who never errs" is dismissed as sophistry: for show me a real-life example of such person and I call you bluff. The real measure of wisdom is in how one attends to misfortune. There is, in fact, a purpose to grief: the natural response to it is lack of energy and a desire to curl and rest – had it occurred to you that this mechanic might be for your protection (against haste)? That worry subsides later, doesn't mean that to worry in itself is foolish. Grief is not a matter of opinion – but that of relevance, and you don't call relevant things irrelevant just because they later may be: for right now, they *are* relevant things. Thus I don't have a miracle cure for grief (just like one for limerence is not instantaneous), but damage control is possible. If you are the person grieving, avoid haste and avoid reaching out to wrong people or wrong places out of desperation. Having this in mind, *attend* to what is relevant; and if customs about bereavement need to be respected, then do act according to the customs – even if this requires putting a facade.

The line must also be drawn between (potentially obsessive and destabilizing) inclination towards compassion and faculty of empathy – they are not the same thing. **Empathy as a mind-inference faculty**, in contrast from personal proclivity of sympathy, is a cognitive skill – a means to an end. As such it does not, by itself, pertain to any socially acceptable behavior, although it can be instrumental towards it, especially when supported by other skills, or otherwise in instructing

one to desist from the course of action one was pursuing (“to fuck off with your good intentions”). The skill of empathy can also be used offensively, or rather as a tool to support a sinister agenda. But before it can be used in said capacity, it must yet still be learned at all, and in this quest illusion of one's superiority – or possessing some unique skills, including presuming oneself to have heightened levels of self-awareness – proves to be an obstacle.

There is, however, a way to circumvent such sense of uniqueness or superiority – through condescending pity not translated into action. One spots an inferior version of oneself in another – such as someone with a cool and powerful alter personality but who is not able to identify themselves with it – and can thus learn of that personality weaknesses, tentatively recognize them in oneself and subsequently transcend them. It is like picking spares from other people – you meet others who can do similar things to you when they are possessed by their alter (even though they wimpishly disown these acts later instead of identifying them as their willful action) – after enough such encounters, you then transcend your own dissociation and no longer need to maintain an illusion of grandeur. It just becomes obsolete: you mastered your own weaknesses by seeing them in others as if others were a mirror to look at oneself, and thus show you part of yourself otherwise hard to reflect on. After you have freed yourself from entitlement, the path to empathy proper is open to you. Subsequently, shards of what you once were are still available to you to wear as a mask – a cover identity, something that can be faked in order to achieve some end.

Having completed previous quest (assuming you needed it) for bringing oneself to integral whole, there are ways to consciously and deliberately train the uncovered faculty of empathy. You may follow suggestions in Naos' chapter called “Empathic magick”. Or you may practice free-form empathy in real-life, trying to guess what other people meant and calibrating your assumption by asking them directly and seeing if you they confirm it or disprove it. Be careful not to overthink its utility, **empathy is not infallible**: if it were, then O9A would not have to use tests in recruition process (the tests are alluded to in, for example, “Satanic Letters of Stephen Brown”, vol I && II). So you improve it by practicing it, treating it, however, as a mentally expensive, “win more” ability – haste, tiredness, anger are signals to look for deescalation first and foremost, and thus moral approach (to prevent akrateia), not for trying to get into mind of another person and return it, for that itself can result in escalation. And if another person suddenly behaves not like you predicted – for example, going “no contact” with no explanation (behavior that received the term “ghosting”) – then avoid guessing reasons and take care of yourself.

Another way to practice empathy is to defend someone's position – whether you privately agree with it or disagree – in debate with multiple parties. Like when you know what the person meant and others misunderstand it, and you can restate it better (as if you were a lawyer helping defendant in court), possibly even creating an echo chamber where the opponent is being attacked by multiple people that can relate via experience to each other. Be cautious not to fall into rationalization: if you don't understand where another person is coming from, then you don't. Don't fall into a trap of certitude of knowing. Fundamentally you must share something in common with person's experience in order for empathy to be successful. You may also still be susceptible to being blinded by what you find relevant vs irrelevant – while seeing relevance differently than the other person does. Importantly, I discovered that what I saw in a person, necessary existed, but while I saw a part of what they are, I overlooked what they want to be, their intentions which are at odds with what they are, and yet that part is often quite significant and indeed may be a decisive factor in which course of action they elect to pursue (such course, for example, may be contrary to their talents – and thus how we would have applied them – but instead be in conformance with social expectations and narrative).

There is a technique that may yet work around this limitation (of overlooking what the target being studied holds relevant), though it can't help you get results in real-time. The method: turn someone you remember but whose actions you don't understand, into an imaginary servant by coercing their memory representation to be unconditionally benevolent – as if creating a tulpa or, more precisely, a servitor prototyped on the real person targeted for scrutiny. The servitor may carry out mental tasks like cheering you up, aiding in self-reflection, etc. It is like making an effigy of a real-life person in your mind, but not in order to effect changes on real person, but in order to exhaust this effigy – made up of your projections – in service to you. What you have thus picked as relevant, will depress itself and fade, giving way to things you also remember about them but previously overlooked: such as their actions that did not mesh with the goal you would pursue if you were them, but that they've done instead in pursuit of goal that matters to them.

Note this approach is a reversal of scientistic one of trying to grasp every factual detail: here we are taking an image and distorting it away from reality, not trying to calibrate it closer, but through subtraction of resulting ‘fake’ gestalt from the plethora of remembered individual impressions, we are able to see that which would we normally would not see. We don't start perfect here – and we deliberately aim to the side, then, through some obscure practice, arrive at actual precision unattainable through scientific method. Just like how one learns to

throw things by hand with precision not through studying physics, but through iterations of trial-and-error.

Note also, the use of imagination in Eclipsement method presented in first half of this guide, in the method to write instructionary tale of fiction presented in “Skin in the game and its impostors” part of present treatise, and in servitor technique here. I consider it (training imagination faculty) to be an important part of combating and rejecting materialistic (and thus fatalistic) weltanschauung of modernity – thus also a practical defense against fatalism. And still, the type of empathy covered so far must be understood as being purely causal and ultimately fallible, as well as easily confused with rationalization – hence the methods to verification and correction. O9A also claims it to be possible to acquire and develop a skill of acausal empathy, specifically this can be done by taking an *extended* form of The Grade Ritual of Internal Adept (the one that lasts 6 months and over harsher seasons). No shortcuts are known to exist – and even the non-extended form is hard, the only *reliable* publicly available account of it in writing so far is “Dyssolving: Diary of Internal Adept” by Christos Beest (this pseudonym is known to belong to Richard Moult). I will leave it (the topic of acausal empathy) at that.

Don't get misled by supposed easiness with which plebs “connect” to each other – they are not actually capable of empathy. Were there to be genuine connections among the mundane folk, they would not be complaining of loneliness and a need to keep to themselves to avoid backlash. They merely mimic things agreed upon as ‘normal’ without feeling them and their masks mirror those at each other – it is just role-play with the script already written by someone else, with the most common reason for conversation being mutual test for adhering verbatim to this script (the protocol of “I'm ok and you're ok” bidirectional validation). When you actually start trying to develop genuine seeing-into-others, you will find out it (real empathy) is hard – and the answer is you are actually trying to do what really few people bother to do. Overall, the deal with empathy is the same as with self-reflection: if you are trying to compensate with it for lack of some real-world ability, you are heading in the wrong direction and hopefully remind yourself to stop early. The person who fought much harder challenges earlier in life than Jung charted as normal progression, will be unfortunately susceptible to commit this error. For haven't extreme ordeals outside normal experience pushed one closer to their personal enlightenment – advanced one ahead of time along

"the hero's journey"[30]? Yet don't fall for the trap of thinking so. Empathy only gets practical on top of overall resourcefulness, until then it can only get you tactical victories that won't be significant or durable. The skill of empathy is a late-game investment, it will shine when you are already a winner in life. By contrast, assertiveness – being able to tell another person which lines they do not cross and enforce such lines – will get you practical results early, though to be effective outside of personal relationships it will still have to be complemented by status.

It is indeed my opinion that one shouldn't totally neglect getting good by society's standards. All land is owned, farming and solitude won't make you anymore as free as man deserves. There is more to life than that surface of success, though. We are looking for a real distinction and that doesn't cut it. But when going non-common path – where social success is mere means rather than an end – one should be prepared to face loneliness and opposition: shed the need to belong. This is achieved by **overcoming hardship without help of others.** Here, I am not talking inner battles like those that make you think about empathy, self-reflection, etc. afterwards. It is instead the kind where all you want is to get as fucking resourceful as possible and make things forever right. This is about darkest venues of life, adversity is external and sustained, better yet, persistent, combined with internal isolation. Other people may still be physically present, but when it is a tough environment like jail, you will know what I mean about being internally isolated. You are being watched, scrutinized, have to keep your guard up at all time. Effectively, you are alone. While you might need to form a tribe to collectively defend your goods, this cooperation is over utility. And all connections (in prison environment) that aren't about utility, are about hierarchy.

The survival razor indeed effects real and mostly irreversible transformation on character. Though this does not mean you can't grow fragile again by adopting cope (having a criminal record is constraining, yeah), but you won't be same as before again. If you ever resented the way you were raised and sought to change your character (to drop compulsion to forgive, for example), you will recognize how different the conception of being tough is from actually being tough. When life makes you an actual monster, you know no intellectual effort could have resulted in the same. It does not require you any effort to be 'egoistic' – *you are*.

[30] The hero's journey is an abstraction of linear progression. Individuals are not subject only to development, but also to deterioration. Even selecting multiple metrics on each one where there can be development, standstill or deterioration *independently of each other*, would be still a gross oversimplification. There is no guarantee of anything, except for slowness and frailty of old age.

Except that this is not about 'ego' in slightest. I call this "stygian individualism"[31]. Verbal reasoning rests its case and *pure survival* and not competitive instinct is engaged. There is no pleasure-seeking either. Certain concerns are just no longer relevant – they don't even enter consideration for relevance in first place. It is a gift from fate, and not all are destined to receive it – for many will not survive.

Do note that such toughening up doesn't necessarily correlate to caring about society – a willful decision has to be made, on the part of individual, towards helping others combat what one went through or not end up that way in first place. Otherwise this ruthless selection may not benefit the collective: while the individual does become sturdier and harder to take down (because purged of fragile qualities), this is a very different parameter from being capable of contributing something great to humanity, for the latter implies the relevant set of skills exists (which skills may not have, however, been relevant in survival), and that one has already taken care of all their own needs and has resources to spare (which is unlikely without others in one's life). The practical value of being hardcore is that one is capable of staying the course one took, so it is not abandoned because of social adversity, and elimination of obstacles – wayward inclinations such as chasing pleasure or peer recognition. Stygian individualism hints at possibility of transcending ego-consciousness even when not following moral code – which may be needed, if situation is hard to reason from moral perspective, or when one is engaging adversarial action and as such their pursuit may present moral ambiguity. Aside from survival, **it is possible to escape the gravity of ego through approaching endurance activities a certain way**. The advantage this gives you is that lows can't affect your determination.

As I wrote in my metaphysics, ego is intrinsically connected to image of others, so this means that useful forms are those that reinforce absence of that projection about others in what one considers relevant. One such example is striving to complete race as hard as possible, without using others as anchor for how to run it, so hard that one can, with honesty, ascertain that she couldn't have yielded any better time that day. In other words, you gotta squeeze yourself out in competition, whether all foes be faster than you or all slower than you. You'll

[31] Inspiration came from color called "stygian blue", which cannot be normally seen because of how human sight works. In a same way, stygian individualism defies all introspection – there are no verbal thoughts connected to action in such mode, only possibly reflection on actions already done with no affect of actions that continue to get done in real-time. Despite that, one does not appear to lack precision, indeed, one can have more precision than ordinarily possible because of being able to make split-second decisions rapidly.

charge the finish lane as if it is was the last race of your life and you were prepared to die immediately after, even if no one is in the lane that can overtake you or that you can realistically overtake. You'll optimize your progression throughout the race as well – no slacking, no reserves – all is to be spent, though spent wisely. If you get "second wind", you failed – didn't run hard enough in the middle of the race, or ran too hard in the beginning. Don't fall also for any person pushing you to run harder than you can afford to meet your race goal – you must condition yourself to be completely self-rooted. This approach to racing I inferred from description of physical challenges (what is pursued and how they are adjusted by a person's extant skill, if any) in the book "Naos: A Practical Guide to Modern Magick" – I will leave it to reader to locate those descriptions on their own time.

To survive one's own errors while already facing external adversity, one must have both resilient and antifragile qualities to save the day. Only those people who are antifragile gain from adversity, whereas resilient merely survive and fragile stand no chance at all. That to be antifragile one needs a mix of antifragile and resilient qualities follows from next observation. Antifragile may not start out strong but only gain sufficient strength after much iterations of being tested by adversity – surviving thus will at first be carried by resilience. Rushing ahead of time in order to prove oneself, one may yet perish though could have lived if instead have been honest as to how much strength must be first gained – i.e. followed a practical approach vs one steered by being desperate for reputation. It is necessary thus to be realistic in assessing tail risk to oneself, and plan contingency measures in advance, when sizing up challenges to pursue by going out of one's way.

Yet **this kind of hardiness or another, won't be achieved through imitating some 'hardcore role model'**. A role model involves projection *about* thing-in-it-self, not even cast directly from it, but a collective reification of thing-as-it-appears, a narrative established about appearance – a tertiary source. Hardcore role models are still important and useful – for initial inspiration, and for clarification of what should be valued – yet still there will be many more Walter Mitties drawn to such image than those who go on to actually do anything at all. But emulation won't provide means to become hardcore oneself, for insight into workings of how-shit-gets-done cannot be obtained from it. Role models rather indicate destination – a spot on the map to reach – rather than method to arrive at it. Think of legends told of massive booty to be got somewhere, with no certainty of how much of it is true (lapis philosophicus can be thought one such treasure). For it is not like we are trying to copy some simple action as throwing a rock as far as possible – and by necessary witnessing it directly rather than reading an account about some famous rock-thrower. Anything complex, details matter

– details that thing-as-it-appears already won't convey, much less a narrative about said appearance. Even in rock-throwing, where method can indeed be sketched from what is seen, it still would take one some tries to get the hang of it – and one still has to be strong enough in first place for the rock not only to go by desired trajectory but really be carried far enough because allocated sufficient impulse. Negative role models – cautionary tales exemplified by fools who worked themselves into oblivion – will likewise be more robust than positive ones; and Ancient Greek drama has definitely not overlooked this aspect, for it has examples of people who formerly enjoyed power and glory getting cut down by fate because of abusing their authority.

Neither did O9A overlook the utility of negative role model – from memory: look for items such as “Satanism Plebeanized”, “The Temple of La-La-Land” (the latter one does not appear in archive I made), etc. ‘Hardcore role model’ would be good for PR: it can be thought as a step above ‘outer representative’ in spreading awareness and getting recognition. To avoid footnote: ‘outer representative’ is/was an O9A deceptive ‘post’ (not actually taken seriously within O9A) which can be likened to a PR manager or salesperson in a regular tech company in regards to what they know and how they (mis)present it. Within O9A such ‘position’ would be a test: a time-waster that, nonetheless, offers one opportunity to make connections or do some japes of their own – in other words, a person with this position would be ‘used’ and expected (in a sense of ‘left to their own devices’) to make the role recompense for it through their own guile. To outsiders, ‘outer representative’ would be a fake authority those with the need for authority figures fall for. To this effect, the name of such ‘position’ used to be capitalized at the time – i.e. “Outer Representative” – but given its puffatory nature by now has become obvious there is no longer a need to indulge this sentiment.

The absence of dogmatism is another distinguishing trait of O9A, which trait is also the appeal behind true science as opposed to scientism. In real life, no truth is forever settled: everything is questionable and subject to revision, and this pledge and commitment to continuous revisionism – and resulting self-honesty and non-pretentiousness – separate the wise and noble from ‘experts’ with entitlement. This aspect of O9A was originally promoted under the slogan “authority of individual judgment”, but it proved to be misleading, being conflated by outsiders with having original opinions for the sake of originality. The rejection of dogma never meant there aren't agreed upon methods as to how propositions are made, for them to be judged at all worthy to be considered in first place. As science has its method, so does O9A; the absence of authority declaring what is right, does not mean that anyone is entitled to do revisions, just like scientists are not going

to evaluate claims of some schoolboy. Having original opinions likewise does not make you smart, disagreeing with something that is written does not mean you are cool because you ‘don't fall for authority’; just like agreeing with something that is written by someone else – because your experience makes you in agreement – does not make you foolish and conforming, but the contrary.

As I discovered, hard physical challenges aren't about endurance per se – they are about determination, willpower, and a practical approach as well. There is a lot of depth to actually getting results: I knew talented, but risk-averse people who were overtaken by those who were risk-takers, which is really how I learned to appreciate risk. Risk is also not everything – interval training is key to being fast, if you can't figure out how to both stack mileage and do it without overtraining, then you don't get to be fast at long distance. Strength also needed – even if you will compete on the “flat” terrain – as when you run ultramarathon, the slightest incline builds up. And anything hilly you just plain need it. An exploit one of those risk-embracing guys has found is to look up on Strava how champions are training and copy their routine – they are apparently not paranoid about others seeing it. Unlike with positive role model, copying the method actually works. The same guy also figured out – when he ran more than 230K in 24 hours race – that training speed still matters there. I remember he previously claimed that 100K has more speed in its training for him, than 24 hour run, however, in the talk we had after he was able to break that threshold, he revised that position, saying that speed matters even there. Hence why I don't appreciate mere opinions, and why I don't also opine as how it is best for reader to train, for I didn't get that good. Hell, a lot of my hypotheses I had originally about running (pre all training) were squashed in a first few months of training for a marathon. Should be noted, I was never quite disposed towards sports and only started the whole athletic ordeal because The Sevenfold Way prompted me to try things out. That, as well as I've agreed that there are people that would be worth for me to learn from, or entertain their views over my own – which learning is possible without admitting that teachers (or other people) went further / achieved more than you have done (yet)?

And despite what vile propaganda of Establishment claims about O9A, the inspiration I took from O9A's physical hallmarks of The Sevenfold Way was precisely instrumental in developing self-control, discipline and restraint. For anger at those who are faster than you is no use in long-distance running. The ‘opfer’ dialectic I interpreted as giving examples of ‘negative role model’ and being a rather subtle promotion of meritocracy as ideal (just) social order, rather than endorsement of vigilante justice. Even though my desire for revenge did provoke

initially some Walter Mittiesque *fantasies* about “doing deeds” I never acted upon them. Thus while enamoured by methods that can be put towards any ends I desire (“dynamite principle”), I nonetheless did not cross the threshold to become even a criminal, much less a terrorist. **Apparently this ‘terrorist ideology’ was not successful at corrupting me, or – the elephant in the room – O9A is not terrorist, and is not an ideology.**

Ultramarathons, by the way, are a good test for practical wisdom when you have to manage a race that has not gone to plan – and even one where you didn't come undertrained can test you by tempting to run after people who lack that practical wisdom, and charge the first half of the race above their ability then fall off behind. Such fodder is usually numerous, and since there are always people on the race who can actually run that hard because they are that good, it may seem that you are the only person who is not, and it may look that way for hours, which is the fun part of it – you learn to ignore what others with very different capacity do, to orient around your own actual skill and to not be bothered by provocations.

A reader might interject, still, that “infiltration task” I suggested is also a form of vigilantism. However, I explicitly prohibited this vigilantism to resort to illegal methods, and the actual objective is not in disruption – which disruption can be considered at worst amoral, for I know of no laws that prohibit steering interpersonal conflicts within group so that it falls apart. The actual objective is in attaining insight into how society works, how activist movements work and what they really are about as opposed to their stated claims, and a test of one's own social ability, learning one's factual strengths and limitations. That is, experiencing reality sans narratives. The secondary objective of disruption is merely a game with measurable outcomes – to facilitate making effort. And in regards to reality sans narratives – due to the fact that said narratives are pervasive, the only alternative that would allow to escape them would be reclusive living far from any cities or urbanization and with rather limited contact (or absence whatsoever) with outer world. Within context of O9A, the Rounwytha way offers that, but who is so capable to live without any modern conveniences today?

I also do not claim that such activities produce Aeonic change or any external meaningful change, indeed the original Insight Roles that this was derived from may not, actually, themselves be capable of changes other than in person undertaking them. At least, in so far as the person undertaking them does not become role model to others – if they do, maybe some subtle change does end up being

wrought, though one also can achieve the same in physical activities department, if they manage to do that “zero to hero” transformation and inspire others who are *physically around such people* to copy the best part of them along with their exploits. Such practical influence, however, is constrained to those in physical proximity – narratives don't really achieve that effect, but personal knowing of someone who did things and how they did, does have a non-negligible effect.

In the above passage I thus hinted about that **O9A does not seek to change societies through conventional political means**, but rather that such outer forms present an opportunity to produce a certain psychic contagion – should the Initiate be so able as to impress others – and by this way of wave-like impact to actually affect, in a slow way, collective unconscious and thus change what outer forms, political, religious or any other are compatible with the collective unconscious in first place. How slow? Such minor alterations by specific resourceful individuals are cumulative over *centuries*, we are not talking about anything that would threaten current Establishment thus, even if I am not quite fond of said Establishment for my own, personal reasons. It should be also made clear that individuals not necessary stay the path to its very end having contributed so, hence metaphor of the wave. And the emphasis that this wave takes centuries to produce meaningful impact on humanity – found in O9A material that mentions Aeonic perspective and the failure of every other option to produce results – also means that O9A does not believe in accelerationism and their conclusions are diametrically opposite of it.

In regards to infiltration task I outlined before, it is also expected that one will face a moral dilemma, and elect to help certain people within the movement instead of – or in addition to – disrupting it. Contrast actually helping people in person with serving political agenda that will ‘strategically’ make fair but in reality not at all. Which way one resolves this moral dilemma and what lessons they learn as the result, is up to them. One undertaking adversarial action solo will always face doubts, consider alternate routes to making a distinction, etc. – for this is very, very different from doing undercover work with a curator overseeing such engagement.

The personal learning and transformation is thus the only guaranteed result of said practices such as “Insight Role” or the “infiltration and disruption agenda”, and the underpinning idea is: one takes a certain value system, and then puts this value system to a brutal and honest test against life itself. In case of (political) Insight Role, this value system would be one partly derived from a role and otherwise derived from O9A's code; in case of infiltration task, it will be one's

own value system. The former – adopting a value system foreign to one hitherto – is, of course, a much harder version, and thus it must be understood that O9A Insight Roles are therefore not convenient means to someone who seeks fame or a political end for its own sake, and thus such people are bound to lose inspiration from O9A and find it elsewhere. Hence those few individuals that Establishment attributed association with O9A, which individuals (not actually associated with O9A nor known to people who are actually O9A) committed – or sought to commit – depraved actions, have most assuredly failed to stick to the prescribed path and sought *justification* for the actions they *already* wont to commit of their own volition in a plethora unrelated ideologies that don't put such constraints, such standards, as O9A Sevenfold Way does.

For those ideologies (for example, “Siege” book by James Mason) – or worse yet, “advisors” one comes in contact with (“advisors” being undercover operatives of “agent provocateur” kind) – in contrast to O9A are indeed not interested in putting any barriers to action. Individuals who fall for this trap, will always find justification in something for their ‘quick path to glory by means convenient to themselves’: fundamentally, they seek cope that will frame their violent instincts as being indulged towards meaningful, and impactful, purpose. On the other hand, Insight Role – just like everything O9A – is the opposite of convenient: as opposite as it gets really, what with mandatory lower and upper time limits, the role being necessary contrary to one's beliefs and character as mandatory prerequisite, complete secrecy and consequent isolating nature. **O9A was not designed for a quick path to glory** – the kind of quick path to glory the murderer of John Lennon have sought – everything in The Sevenfold Way is testing and hard.

Furthermore, a good deal of O9A material has nothing to do with ambition nor politics – if O9A at all ever ascribed ambition any positive value – but is of purely intellectual or mystical nature: The Star Game, learning languages used by ancient civilizations, Tarot and pathway workings, scholarly study of Western esotericism – “Corpus Hermeticum”, and Cicero's “Somnium Scipionis” – and of Arabic sources that parallel observations made in those ancient Western sources – “Ghayat al-Ḥakim”, and a little-known uncatalogued manuscript that had “Al-Kitab Al-Alfak” (sic) title added to it by someone who was not its original author. Individuals of non-Western heritage were instructed to do research into ancestral traditions linked to their own culture, examplified in writings of certain “outer representative” – a gay woman of Thai descent – on a long-defunct onanxs.wordpress.com blog. The four fictional novels that together form “The Deofel Quartet” are absent political content and are instead concerned

with themes of love, individuation and self-development, and also show positive appreciation of same sex relationships, whether these pertain to characters that are not aligned with protagonists but may be a neutral side, or even to their allies or characters that constitute positive role models. On top of all that, the blogs of those who claim association of O9A have always published divergent opinions on controversial subjects, thus making it impossible to fall back on authority figures for those individuals who have such defect (of deferring to external authority). Indeed I came to conclusion that bombarding observer with multiple mutually contradicting narratives is a deliberate technique of O9A – dialectic which promotes self-honesty (the actual Aeonic dialectic), by making it impossible to fall back on "trust that which is written but you cannot personally verify" bad habit and thus forcing one to unlearn it. Hence if some individual (who is found in possession of O9A material) demonstrates bias towards politics or terrorism, then he cannot be that way because of O9A. With the vast part of O9A curriculum having nothing to do with politics, and Satanism established in the novels as beginner's temporary game, the slander accusation of O9A as promoting a Satanic and National-Socialist ideology is counter-factual – one that can only be stuck to through willful ignorance.

This distortion around O9A must then be countered by restoring focus to what is actually relevant – the quest of individual self-development, and concern for the future of humanity understood not in short-lived political but in esoteric terms. The latter concern, however, has this difficulty that only those who have gone beyond the stage of Internal Adept can meaningfully contribute to it (dialectics' contribution such as described above is minimal and doesn't affect all people – only some), whereas for those yet to resolve their own personal quest, attempts to premature participation in it has been at best a learning experience but otherwise a trap. Hence I will stick to the former subject more than to the latter, and also keep in mind that some practices and subjects that O9A has to offer I didn't consider at the time to be of personal relevance – for example, the Western esotericism tradition is not my strong point and I will have to skip it. Instead, I will focus on **reviewing The Deofel Quartet** – for these novels I consider to be superior to many works of fiction, with probably only Greek tragedy surpassing them. A side note, however: despite being a story focused on positive depiction of love between gay women, "Breaking The Silence Down" didn't originate as O9A story so I won't review it – for me, there is no such thing as "The Deofel Quintet", only "The Deofel Quartet" (the fact that most insertions to "Anton Long's" version of "Breaking The Silence Down" were ripped from "The Temple of Satan" is cue).

“Falcifer, Lord of Darkness” pertains to games played with novices – by those temporarily assuming leadership of a “Satanic” temple (in reality as a task on the Sevenfold Way, a task that tests one's leadership ability, charisma and imagination) – particularly giving purposefully misleading cues, such as claiming there are “no ethics” to make it impossible for the person so tested to infer which action they should fake in order to be ‘accepted’, and thus forcing them to reveal their real character. Apart from being test of character (that would be invalidated if one knew what behavior to emulate), this technique may also reveal spies: those with ulterior motives are likely to stick to overt imitation of what they mistake to be the group's ideal, while remaining deceived about their real standing with the group. There are ethics after all – the distinction between noble and contemptible, skilled and opportunistic, which (as seen through virtue ethics theory) is born of innate understanding but can be refined further through instruction – the group doesn't target arbitrary people, but those who sought injury to it in first place and have thus selected themselves as its enemies.

Correctly thus Conrad doesn't pursue to take advantage of Denise, a gay woman who is operating her own agenda and who helped him recover from injuries that could have otherwise been lethal; whereas the White Lodge so to speak, in their hubris thinks that “Denise never been with man” meant she is “virgo intacta”, the Christian prejudice of women as being weak and lacking initiative. So too does a spy betray himself (a second time) by not realizing the kidnapped woman was a test, and the real candidate for culling had been him all along – a setup all too obvious to those who have read O9A material proper. Thus ‘Satanists’ use their opponents' folly to lure them into a trap. Characteristic of O9A stories that involve acausal entities – others are not part of “The Deofel Quartet” – there is some ambivalency to the ending: a woman with psychic faculties that do not fit Nazarene tradition, who nonetheless doesn't welcome their arrival, as if setting reader for realization that some of those entities ‘from beyond’ may not be allied to humanity and not related to fulfilling its potential, but who might use humans as tools in their own power struggle. In other stories a character that fits this ‘woman of psychic talents’ archetype is often coincidentally Rounwytha, although this does not mean the one in “Falcifer” novel necessarily is. Also note that Tanith and “Master”, just as Conrad's female companion in infiltration affairs, are shapeshifters and not human, hence also the source of magic in “Falcifer”, and their character and words thus may seem awkward and weird to reader if reader is projecting (even modern) gender expectations onto them – these characters are not “poorly written” as someone might think, but the contrary: purposefully different from human characters. Concealed to first-time reader is also the fact

that Conrad, though having the makings of Vindexian figure and a heavy dose of ambition – which ambition, at times, certain characters correct by ignoring his boastful statements (“Must be my natural charm!” as an example of boastery as well as speculation about causality, turned down) – is not Falcifer that the novel's title refers to.

So we see thus, that absence of Christian norms doesn't entail absence of morality per se, but rather absence of obstinate prohibitions (such as those insulting to some authority or otherwise contrary to empty ideals of “priestly men”) as well as absence of prejudice. In “Falcifer” and two of other novels, “The Temple of Satan” and “The Greyling Owl”, there are gay and bisexual characters, which though not always allied with protagonists, their (characters') sexual preferences never seem unnatural or bad to ‘sinister’ actors, just as them being at odds with patriarchial norms of behavior is never at all an issue either. Contrast that with Leo Tolstoy's “Anna Karenina”, where a certain relationship between women may have been prototyped on what in reality was a homosexual relationship, so eerily is its depiction of one woman admired by another that one can only think of what a male author may have failed to see but which was in plain sight.

I personally liken the novel's character Conrad not to Faust but to Giordano Bruno – whom I was fond of since my middle school years. For even though I was brought up in religious household, I had natural affinity for science and for rational-minded folk who questioned authority. Thus I subsequently grew only more fond of him when I learned that Giordano Bruno was persecuted not for heliocentrism but for dabbling in Occult and for defiance of authorities, that is, he was a heretic who respects science but doesn't respect religious dogma, and instead develops his own weltanschauung. This parallel I drew should hint at the stark contrast between a rational mind coupled with morality of honor (an O9A ideal), and a repression of sensual life coupled with submission to abstract tradition laid down by authority (a Judeo-Christian ideal). Where the flock of modernity may have done away with repression of sexuality, it still remains duped by causal abstractions, by slavish belief in “powers that be” (now secular), and quite often still repression of the rest of sensuality not to do with sex – them in everyday life thus being “rational by repression of emotions” rather than “rational as in expediency”. Their fake rationality – being merely an appearance – thus flies out of the window when they act in position of authority, getting replaced with an affective state of conduct, characterised by absence of self-awareness and by heavy proclivity to make projections. Though recently a polar opposite (yet still degenerate) trend has emerged, of young people who are unstable in entirety, whose emotions and perception of self swing without finding balance,

who scorn self-discipline (and thus also lack rationality) but adore psychiatric medication, talk therapy and their own “mad” identity.

“The Temple of Satan” is concerned with subversion of patriarchial (Magian) narratives about gender, with trappings of assumed roles (possession by archetype) and what can cut through these trappings, and hints how Aeonic change may be brought about. Subversion of traditional gender roles takes place in two distinct ways simultaneously: 1) practical empowerment of women through letting them explore role of ‘Satanic Mistress’ 2) honest-to-reality portrayal of men showing traditional masculinity for “smoke and mirrors” it is. The novel does recognise that, while the role of ‘Satanic Mistress’ presents a liberation opportunity, an experience enabling “moving beyond” what they were hitherto – under certain conditions it can also become a trap, that is, substitute a goal or be difficult-to-part-with, with individual ‘having become a role’ instead of ‘using a role’, or even become disillusioned with the role only to fall into yet another one. Like a role of ‘a lover’, for example.

A reduction of ‘self’ towards a role – or possession by archetype – can happen a multitude ways. One of them is “illusion of maturity”, when one according to “exterior view of oneself”, has reached other's expectations, became a “serious” man or woman (a prominent trope in Simone de Beauvoir's existential philosophy) – in this one typically feels having ‘ascended’ to predestined fate, fit in society. In this scenario, must be noted, “exterior view of oneself” is not an objective view, but a reification in one's mind, “how one sees others seeing himself” as opposed to “how others actually see one”. Another scenario is resignation from ambition, settlement with that exterior view which is not favorable – in this one feels of having failed to escape from predestined fate or even that such escape be impossible. Regardless of which way one arrives, one's agency is captured through self-deception – they abandon existential goals and their view of themselves becomes reductionist. You can even argue they objectify themselves – become an object described by collective unconscious, rather than a self-determined agent for such agent can never be archetypal. In the novel, shook by unusual character of Thurstan, Melanie is both tempted by love and resigning to it (having failed to subdue Thurstan and having failed in her other pursuits at the time – or so she believes at the time to have failed, about the latter). Experiencing a new, unexpected opportunity, she also grows dissatisfied with her position of ‘Satanic Mistress’ – which she previously did use to her advantage but now she ceases to derive pleasure from it – for that pleasure which results from controlled experiences is shadowed by novelty of relationship with Thurstan.

Thurstan may be the only outlier for Melanie, but those readers who still trust narratives of patriarchy may find themselves baffled by other male characters in the novel as well. Yet those 'flawed' characters are a common occurrence in real life, which those who are self-honest will have no trouble recognizing. I personally like to bring up the subject of "weak, silent type" with friends in Canada to break stereotyped views through counterexample. The weak, silent type doesn't imply non-violent or sober. It is about "can't win arguments, lacks persuasiveness and charisma", "loser retreating into his inner world", "priest of retreat and resignation" in which "priestly man" archetype meets "pariah of life". Man's silence is seldom a sign of strength but correlates far more often with timidity, which timidity nonetheless does not preclude these men to use muscle when they fail in negotiation with someone weaker, or otherwise when they are intoxicated on alcohol. Yet otherwise they are timid by nature: their nervous system is too weak to run for long. These men are in fact not lazy, but rather burn out quickly, so there is nothing you can do about it cause their limits are set low on genetic level. And ever since Western (and some other) societies declared gender equality in the constitutions of their states, these societies actually got more Darwinian: offspring of such men will be disadvantaged because of their diminished mental endurance. In societies where there was mandate to artificial power disparity between sexes, and fixed position of power for males and submission for females, these specimen may yet striven, in tribal societies, they may yet had a useful role in community, but in modern atomicized societies, they will be losers – less achievements, less capable of standing up for themselves, less everything.

Going by Saer's agenda in the novel, to make way for Aeonic change masks of traditional masculinity and feminity must be torn apart (not in a way it is done by asinine neoliberal agenda, though), so that self-honesty prevails. Now, isn't it what O9A was doing all along, and hence places political extremism followed by "we are not what you think we are", in proper context – of inviting assumptions, then debunking them, all to the end of promoting self-honesty? The success of this strategy may yet been limited to those perceptible – most likely, to those people who did try at least some of the stuff The Sevenfold Way prescribes – as it is possible one to avoid these challenges through cope (such cope as embracing political extremism as a 'real' end or dismissing O9A with antifascist prejudice, both cases landing simple yet false answers to genuinely difficult questions). Nonetheless, judging by myself O9A's strategy was actually successful, what with me going from personal "agenda of vengeance" to discussing such topics as morality.

It must be noted, however, in respect of deconstructing gender, that narratives being false with respect to reality does not mean that we should elect new narratives. It is understanding gender as reification, and recognizing the fact that gender roles of old did not even aim at describing reality, but merely at organizing society, at being instruments of control and preservation of then-existing authority, hence seeking new meaning of gender in "equality of sexes" society is a mistaken endeavour, or otherwise a malicious agenda that consolidates new 'powers that be' (oligarchs, globalists, etc.). All narratives are false a priori, only objective reality matters, an objective reality that is impossible to know – as in, obtain perfect detailed knowledge of it – though we can know *our way in* objective reality. Thus forms such as experiences of unconventional or difficult role, are dialectical "via negativa" meant to contradict, expose and refute existing assumptions, they are not final destinations but transient experiences. Political Insight Roles – which are nowhere to be found in The Deofel Quartet by the way – would also be such forms that are lived temporarily. The reason why engage in them roles at all is to make evident and confront that which was uncritically absorbed, whether in childhood and thus before we lived in conscious manner, or through copium at any point in our life when we have struggled. Copium is not only to be rejected but is to be replaced with solutions, and to find solutions requires engagement in real world.

"The Giving" appears to also feature elements of gender subversion, but here this aspect runs secondary to the rural way of life and pagan tradition, so I will focus on the latter. While the novel contains Occult scares, I've come to conclusion that there is no actual Satanism in the novel, and that all 'supernatural' elements are tests and communicated threats that grab unconscious attention, trigger fear and doubt, but do not operate in objective reality like crystals from Temple of Satan or magic in Falcifer. Whether intended by novel's transcriber or not, the novel permits this reading. I say transcriber, because the source, and hence 'author', may have been a collective, original story transmitted orally.

In my interpretation of the story, Lianna is not responsible for death of Monica, though she may have performed a "good riddance" gesture after the fact. But most of all, I think Lianna predicted that Monica will die, as per my real life experience, I came to conclusion that certain people, vulgar and reckless, and lacking discipline, tend to attract death, and their antagonism with people who learned from adversity may accelerate that fate, that natural predisposition towards ruin. Lianna, possessing a type of clairvoyance, in fact offered Monica a proposition that would have saved her life, had Monica accepted it. This would have sufficed as numinous retribution for the part Monica played in Mallam's

schemes – a voluntary exile from community – but in her stubbornness, Monica the Fool chose to die instead. It is more difficult to say how it ended for Mallam, though he might have been cast into exile rather than killed – the blood on Lianna's hands and dress that Thorold thinks he saw may have been her own.

Thus dialectics of conflict can be used to deadly effect, by emboldening people into recklessness through opposition to you: for if you are speaking from position of experience, what you tested in life, and they are revolting against it, this means they are adopting stance opposite of what works in life. Though not anyone can be drawn all the way to their accidental death by such dialectics: my observation shows it is rather individuals with both vulgar character and lack of discipline. But renown of others doesn't save individuals from ‘death mark’ that gets placed in this manner. This realization made me stop going out of my way to help people who can't help themselves – I knew their demise was a certainty if they disagreed with the better part of my experience, and the more they were cheered by others for their childish rebellion the more certain their downfall.

The pagan celebration, the Giving, that Occult elements in the novel detract from somewhat, apparently revolves around soon giving birth to a heir of tradition, and quite possibly also expulsion of individuals whose deeds harm community as an offering to fate to obtain good fortune for the child. One could imagine this being an ancient tradition, exile had been as good as death – or at least, was sufficient for community as this solution would have evolved before the concept of formal justice. There would be also no need for rural communities to trade this custom for some external authority. Hence Lianna's treatment of Mallam, that to modern Western city-dweller, may seem too lax. As for Thorold West, despite lacking initiative at onset of relationship, he proved to be quite an action guy, yet also not absent empathy in the true sense of word: of making correct inferences – or otherwise demonstrating restraint – in situations where the picture is very incomplete and there are misleading cues. Whether his relationship with Lianna will endure or not, is debatable, but the facsimile copy of Naos being ‘signed’ by Thorold West does imply he at least acquire genuine interest in self-development. It appears he is more driven by sexual aspect of relationship, whereas Lianna does appear to have come under natural spell of limerence (what we used to simply call ‘love’, but ‘love’ has other meanings hence disambiguation), as the inevitable result of Thorold occupying an unique place in her life. For there is a reference somewhere in the novel that Lianna had tested others, Thorold would be the first who passed, he is necessary to complete the rite of The Giving, and Lianna soon to come out of fertile age – meaning he is precisely difficult to replace if he ‘escapes’, which is the necessary and sufficient precondition for limerence. For both this

relationship may be temporary: for Lianna, Thorold's unique position ceases with the birth of her child (provided it is a female one) and so too thus love, for Thorold, the impression of 'him being outplayed' and the thrill of unpredictable events he has been to, will also wear off soon. He has also not divorced his previous wife yet went to live on his own, which may (or may not) indicate preference for disengagement once relationship no longer provides comfort. I would say the outcome of this relationship largely rests on compatibility of their views in regards to raising children, since both have predisposition towards hard independence as well as enforcing distance between themselves and other people.

In regards to analysis of Lianna-Thorold relationship above, remember not to read into limerence connotations from sources other than Tennov's original work, and that Internet is especially poor source on this particular subject. Friends whom I lended Tennov's book, found it better align with their experiences than other sources, just like did I. Indeed, since a lot primary sources on important or interesting subjects are usually in languages other than English, I concluded the topic of limerence can serve a good entry-point to "why you can't rely on secondary ones", for those who can't, for example, read classical philosophy (or other ancient works) in Greek or Latin. It is about experiencing how much difference reading primary sources as opposed to derivative works can make, how wildly different the conclusions. And you can't trust translations, as quite a few those of "Agamemnon" of Aeschylus import Christian ethics alien to the source – in fact the only one I read that is free of such distortions is by David Myatt, so imagine we had to wait many centuries before someone actually gave us a honest-to-original English translation that those not fluent in Greek can read. The novel hints at this fact about translations versus primary sources as well – in the episode when Lianna tests Thorold at his library (books have been sent in advance to stage this test by her associate).

The Greyling Owl is concerned with the superior kind of manipulation, one that preserves intellectual capacity of its targets because it doesn't undermine their own sense of integrity. It is about leading allies not slaves, allies who though may feel indebted do not lack confidence, and can put their skill and creativity to a worthy cause they bear no resentment against, for they believe they chose it of their own volition. The novel also actively promotes acceptance of homosexuality, with Fenton a positive gay male character who is also a man of action as well as of empathy. Some straight characters are impressive, too: I personally adore Fiona, which is the character "The Greyling" in the novel's title refers to.

The sheer awesomeness of the trick played by O9A operatives in this novel may inspire reader to try to achieve something similar ahead of much learning, but such untempered attempt is not going to succeed. Take cue that Edmund is presented (through words of his friend, Mickleman “The Owl”) as having much life experience, among them apparently an Insight Role of political kind (which exactly, is not mentioned at all) – the closest anything in The Deofel Quartet ever came to acknowledging politics even exists, and even then it still results at most in merely individual learning, as Edmund leaving that venue behind just like every other he left behind suggests. Also given how much interruptions and even attempts on Mickleman's life happen in the novel, and how he still manages to do himself throughout the novel, only humbled when finally collapsing from sickness and landing into hospital, the feat of converting him to an indebted ally is not easily repeated in real life. Add to that it takes social status of Fiona, Mickleman's interest in her and personal connections (friendships, not status) of Edmund to present a stage in which this at all can be attempted. It is not mere luck: the unpredictable unfavorable circumstances are beat (and even taken advantage of) with many favorable ones, even though in case of Edmund, those are very unconventional.

I would also caution against perceiving oneself as ‘a manipulation shark’ – that you have succeeded in ploughing the crops, does not mean they are yours to harvest. Likewise, strategy is about not making yourself weak (fragile) first or foremost, rather than expecting your enemy makes a certain move. But when enemy makes himself fragile, then you capitalize on his mistake. Thus, when assessing your worth, don't go by ‘sinister manipulation’ credentials, but ask yourself a question: in a hypothetical scenario where adversary have taken away all your friends, and all your ability to manipulate others was also taken from you, what would be left of you? Is there any substance left in you once all renown is gone, no schemes work? Jordan Peterson can serve an example of a gullible person who spent so much time manipulating others he lost vigilance over suggestions he himself took from others. And mind you, it was not that he forgot to clear his own room. He kept telling others to trust authority and he himself trusted authority – and then, on a fateful occasion, it worked “wonderfully” for him. The generic guides for life (including exeats' favourites such as Julius Evola's “Riding the Tiger”) actually can make you fragile – for what is not written there can be the game-changer, the deal breaker. Such “eternal order”-championing books can trigger erroneous cognitive reappraisal – reframing – of one's life challenges ‘being due to flawed epoch’ as well as to overlook things that are relevant.

Most manipulation that transpires in real life is in fact of petty kind (the one that tries to use up an asset at first opportunity rather than convert it through earning his trust), the kind that is fit not for the big boss but for his underlings – for tools – and the gains obtained with it can be less than without any manipulation at all. There is also no way of knowing for certain how one's agenda would pan out. There is only a fact that some people are antifragile and rebound stronger still even from false theories, and some are fragile so they perish from that which passes as 'working' for others. The side observation is also that bullshit does not take credit for you surviving it – your antifragility does: it is not that which doesn't kill you (but attempted) that makes you stronger, but your ability to twist adversity into experience and leverage.

Another non-trivial observation follows. The enduring characteristic of a person is not what goals they choose but how they approach them, including which path they choose to success – their "modus operandi". This is also why I judge O9A's perception of muliebral as less speculative than David Myatt's, despite both can be argued to be an instance of reification. The goals tend to be altogether hidden and frequently differing strongly from our projections, but a good part of how a person conducts themselves is nonetheless exposed. And while making a distinction may be a fixed long-term destination, the choice of concrete implementation of this goal may be interfered by placing obstacles. Consequently, this is also a point where ambiguity may result and where subterfuge – careful adjustments of another person's course through deception and interference – may thus succeed, which is indeed shown in "The Greyling Owl" on the subject of Mickleman. While he may have qualified for an asset because his negative reputation renders him vulnerable to manipulation by the people he is made indebted to, he is not absent some desirable qualities either: in discussion on adjusting the university's selection policy, Mickleman – upon inquiry – states that he avoids opinions, and would rather present a carefully weighted judgment.

Another character converted to benefit sinister agenda is Alison, whose despair *and* conquest of it is going to be relayed through her music – internal state of her psyche mirrored outside, awakening similar potential in others who are receptive of it. This important storyline I believe can also be used to probe the theory that David Myatt is somehow Anton Long, and dismiss it with confidence. First, of course, no court of law ever sentenced David Myatt for running O9A, so such assertions have no ground. Given the extent of surveillance he was subjected to, the allegations of David Myatt's involvement with O9A are either implausible or there was no noteworthiness (and definitely no criminality) to the part he's done – if he had any part in it at all. My assessment based on his relationships

with women presented in Myngath, is that if he ever took the pen of Anton Long, his heart was really not into it: for his love choices were quite opposite of vane and the women he has chosen did not fit the ‘sinister’, elitist or clannish ideal. But the key point is he took no lessons from “The Greyling Owl” for how to support a suicidal person – either he was not at all familiar with the story, or, like I said, his heart was not into Occult. Truth be told, this method of support is NOT guaranteed to succeed, especially if person's self-deprecation is a result of internalizing a harshly critical authority figure, rather than of grief at having being used by others or at one's strength being insufficient to break from one's circumstances by one's own effort. Still, in his analysis in Myngath as to what he could have done differently, he states that he trusted doctor's advice (which he came to regret), and this fact means he acted towards someone close not like some ‘sinister agent that knows better than any socially-approved authority’ would, but like he thought at the time would be best and did not refer to any Occult instruction. This also would be consistent with assertion that his conversion to Islam is genuine, what with acceptance of his own fallibility and trust placed in advice of (some) external authority figures.

For me personally, the Alison's arc has been the source of inspiration for making “O9A and David Myatt's universe” compilation of offline mirrors as a way to persevere through adversity by using my talents. This may be viewed as proof of O9A's Aeonic powers – that O9A can influence people to do something useful without micromanaging circumstances around them (as I wasn't directly instructed by anybody to do this yet felt drawn to do so nonetheless), with the possibility of individual so influenced to personally benefit from it. That I went afterwards to write on the subject of self-determination and morality can be seen as continuation of O9A's Aeonic influence.

So I reviewed The Deofel Quartet, and **there is no denial it is far removed from politics**. But even without Establishment propaganda, the perception bias about O9A as ‘political’ could have persisted, being still a bias – an incorrect perception, that propaganda currently does promote and exploit. There were some people writing ‘on behalf’ of O9A that espoused certain political views, just as there were those who were not. **So why do we notice more those engaging in dialectics, as opposed to those pre-occupied with individual development?**

I believe that “politicians” grab our attention more because they trained themselves to speak, and to present written speech as well in more coherent manner than “non-politicians”. That they were capable of getting far is also the reason they didn't lose interest in politics, even if they realized politics wouldn't result in

meaningful social change. Whereas “non-politicians” are less likely to have an online presence, less likely to talk about their personal journey, and if they attempt to talk about anything they learned they are hardly experienced in presenting it as coherent speech. Why the latter? Because representing one's views in articulate manner also takes experience. When you learn from life as opposed to parroting extant opinions, you might not be able to articulate it so it would sound convincing to others. You are more used to communicate what you have heard – to reproduce already prevailing narratives – whereas communicating new insights you learned on your own requires to find how to shape them into words *from scratch*. Writing what you learned from experience is not easy – easy is to reproduce rumors, old values, etc. You may have also noticed that “bias of what you would say” is often distinct from “bias of what you will do”: the first is concerned with impressing others, the second – with practicality.

Establishment, of course, gains from this false impression, and deliberately promotes it further and suppresses all conflicting narratives for its own malicious agenda. This is evident, for example, in how Wikipedia article is told from value-laden perspective with assertions and hearsay pushed as ‘facts’, and in that “gawathan.wordpress.com” website was removed by WordPress – the website that aimed at telling the O9A side of story proper, rather than engaging in dialectics. Therefore, we witness the propaganda technique of strengthening distortions, exploiting errors, hasty conclusions, amplifying negative tendencies that already exist, that human nature is already predisposed to. Despite challenging all this being an uphill battle (for Establishment has many more resources than the person writing this guide obviously), I nonetheless believe it is necessary to speak favorably of O9A. I give backing to O9A because it is their way that inspired me to get this far – I tested it. Whereas I first came across Taleb's books only in 2024, after already compiling and releasing of “O9A and David Myatt's universe”. So while I appreciate certain concepts from Taleb (most of all “skin in the game” and “antifragility”), to throw away indebtedness to O9A legacy would be denial and cowardice. **My learning about the world through direct personal engagement was indeed result of O9A's original suggestions**, and this work would not exist otherwise.

In respect of direct personal experiences as an adversary of ‘order’ – formerly recommended by O9A (the old Sevenfold Way now retired in favor of Hebdomian Way) – I see *temporary* engagement in Satanism and National-Socialism as mere means of erasing the distorting lenses, breaking them, so that one can study sources of Western esotericism and classical philosophy absent a priori assumptions alien to that era. If you perchance can't let go of modern redefinitions of term limerence

despite having attempted (per my instructions) to do so, then it should be self-evident that mere desire to cast away lenses won't work. Letting go of assumptions one absorbed uncritically is not as easy as just recognizing they exist. Hence the relevance of such controversial methods (working with one's Shadow in a practical manner with real world consequences) that force you to witness reality and discover it is very, very different from narratives. Though proponents of Hebdomian Way have judged these methods obsolete – as David Myatt's recent exploits in translating sources of Western esotericism may have indeed rendered these methods obsolete. But the translation of, say, Corpus Hermeticum text is a recent development, and even his translations of Greek tragedy are more recent than techniques as experiencing a role of Satanic Master/Mistress and engagement in extreme politics. And I also have an impression that practice of Insight Roles was supposed to involve subversion of roles rather than submission (dogmatic adherence) to them, that is, for genuine roles, as some others things suggested as Insight Roles – running a brothel, or leading a gang that specialized in breaking into houses to steal jewelry – were just a trap, a test for the first is definitely incompatible with O9A ethics just like both have nothing to do with self-development.

Don't forget also that **mental gymnastics don't compensate for lack of real world skills**, if one is dependent on others there is little good self-reflection can do other than try to detect and neutralize (prevent internalization of) all negative opinions one gets bombarded with, but no practical solutions can emerge from it if one doesn't have means to walk away from people he should not be with. I thus give credit to The Sevenfold Way for its promotion of skill acquisition and self-sufficiency, rather than merely contemplative self-awareness. Hebdomian Way is not absent practical aspect, either, but since it is a rather recent development I will leave it out of review.

There is also a ‘schism’ among those interested in O9A about what it could have done differently which I don't want to participate in either. I don't think that O9A could have evaded being targeted by Western Establishment no matter what they did – as Snowden's revelations show, the government will exploit any loophole to gather as much intelligence as possible, and O9A being grassroots and its ‘inner circle’ (people actually known to each other with access to aural tradition, well-versed in esoteric matters and advanced to Inner Adept and beyond) having proven capable to resist subversion is already enough reason for it to be targeted. The public justification of this witch hunt is an excuse and its details are irrelevant, the rationalization about “how could we prevent being painted as criminals” is also at best pointless, if not harmful. Establishment has that much more resources

than any grassroots movements to shape narratives about it – the narratives game can't be won. There is something else that can be won, though, or must anyway, if humanity is to survive: a conscious evolved sufficiently to discard narratives and demand and impose skin in the game on those who aspire to positions of authority.

Keep in mind that I draw the line between actual illegal acts (those that damage community) and opposition to Establishment (which opposition may violate its arbitrary imposed 'laws' that only serve the government's own interests, not the public): when I made "The O9A and David Myatt universe", I didn't attempt to obtain deleted blogs from Wayback Machine because Internet Archive terms explicitly prohibit such use, even though there is free software already available that can downloads websites from Wayback Machine. Internet Archive operates to the benefit of humanity and are themselves targeted by corrupt copyright machine, so it would be immoral to misuse their service. This my stance "*some* laws are contrary to morality" is consistent with Kant's quote I presented earlier in part I – even if Kant himself would otherwise have us rather rely on God than disobey state authority. God is dead, so we are on our own here, and our governments are corrupt. But in fighting a government, it is necessary not to overstep the mark – not to harm society.

Having covered those parts of O9A that were relevant to my personal development, I will proceed to the endgame I conceived in aftermath of it: to provide what was hitherto missing from the world – a way for everyone to tackle certain life challenges without any external help or any deference to authority – and by changing what is conceivable and possible, shift the balance of power and correspondingly the rules by which all humanity lives. That is, not violence nor regime change, but mental work that gradually obsoletes power structures, depriving them of utility. In my future Theory of Action, I intend to prototype and pave way for **a new Aeon, one dominated by raw skill and suspicious of all authority**. It will be absent reverence for old age and leaders of the past, it will tolerate no scolding, no obstacle to talent and ability; it will elect no personified idols, for its ethos will be that of **pure practicality**. It shall recognize most authority as at best redundant – thus none will be more unfortunate than those getting in a way of what works directly and does not require supervision. It won't be completely absent hierarchies, but it will scrutinize every authority for setbacks it causes and pronounce its obsolescence at the earliest opportunity. It will be a dynamic world, one that to contemporaries of this treatise would bear no recognizable structure but resemble chaos, for the world of the future will

not be ruled by ideas (-isms) nor planners but will constantly improve itself in bottom-up manner.

This change entails transcending the false dichotomy between individualism and collectivism – the most challenging problem on the list I presented in previous part. Collectivism shall no longer be defined as talk, dining together or pledging oneself to abstract cause or leader. Instead, collectivism must entail cooperation and mutual aid. Individualism thus means elimination of all coercion that doesn't achieve a practical goal or is otherwise unnecessary (excessive) – once again, skills are what produces achievement, not authority nor verbal expression of compassion, love and solidarity. The calibration of this new synthesis of collectivism and individualism, will, of course, have to be achieved in practice rather than through theory, but remember that just like these beneficial forms of individualism and collectivism can co-exist and are not mutually exclusive, so too can detrimental forms and indeed they already co-exist: atomicity in capitalist society is fully compatible with corporate codes, "activist" movements and so on.

Therefore, consistent with the new Aeon would be established preference for skill, cooperation and reliability over status, hierarchies and favoritism – an approximation of the new law thus razor of relevance, paired necessarily with skin in the game. We shall also distinguish between respect for outstanding accomplishments and respect as not deprivation of dignity. All people who espouse virtue of reliability, will have the latter kind of respect regardless of how much they can actually contribute, and people who lost ability having done service to humanity, will also keep the former. What will be gone, is treating authority as "powers that be". A space-faring civilization won't exist otherwise.

How would a world with next-to-minimal authority stop excessive yearnings? By eliminating them at source: excessive pursuits typically result on unmovable authority's orders (orders of those who don't care about details / have no direct knowledge of actual risks), tech engineers by themselves are more mindful of fragility, their agreement on pursuing reckless course is impossible without coercion. Someone always knows about repercussions that will follow, and for making it known will suffice that these people are not silenced. The remaining necessary checks *may* be (only if it serves the future world well) placed by non-numerous and eagerly-rotated aristocracy – that will resemble aristocracy of antiquity in necessary exposure to risk for the sake of others, having *soul in the game* as a condition to both enter aristocracy and inherit it. Otherwise, if you can't let go of "there needs to be authority to stop world from falling apart", then you have not yet overcome helicopter (interventionist) mentality. While

some tendencies to helicopter exist in me also, I've found a way to circumvent them by putting distance – not instruct people in person but give them a written instruction and leave the rest to them to figure out by themselves.

In regards to future publications, given that I didn't arrive at valuable insight through study of humanities – but instead through engaging in those venues of life where tests are real and unforgiving, more such practical engagements will separate the release of this work and the completion of Theory of Action (ToA is but a working title in reality). Furthermore, I have once made this observation: **healthy order of things is when upon achievement, mind has already set sights on a next target**. When running marathons in competition, I targeted beyond the race at hand: my mind was already preoccupied of what I will do next – a yet bigger milestone; whereas few exceptions to this rule correlated with long breaks from all running activity, a symptom that pointed to something akin to existential grief that wouldn't go away with rest. I admit this observation is a diagnostic tool rather than a motto to work oneself into burnout – if no milestone was naturally elected, it means there is an issue to address, but remains to be seen what the issue is and how it can be resolved (these questions can only be answered on a case-by-case basis). This time, I have a private milestone in mind already (private means I am not intending to disclose it): it has not to do with philosophy but with programming, and it won't be associated with this pseudonym. Theory of Action thus will be completed when it is ready – I won't rush it to completion, and might (or might not) publish other philosophical or written works in between.

VIII. Notes on writing practical philosophy and practical works in general

So this is how I went about it. Immediately after completing the universe project, I began a philosophy project of my own. Initially, this philosophy work – which was not then in the form of a guide – centered around the concept of perseverance, and survivalism, particularly distrust for government, as from year 2020 onwards totalitarian bullshit intensified even beyond the “anti-terrorism” scam: by anti-terrorism scam I mean the US Patriot Act and its copycats around the world – perversion of justice and of all principles Western world stands on. However, I soon realized I must steer towards what has been proven to work, rather than fresh conceptions, whereas in regards to self-sufficiency (survivalism proper), I still have to get there. This distinction between ideas that enabled survival, and those adopted following survival, laid the foundation for the work as it is presented here.

The choice of subject was due to what has proven relevant to me in the past few years: to be able to handle interpersonal and social adversity, which ability I

originally acquired by inverting a certain vulnerability into strength. For, as I explained in “An existential love?” chapter, solving the problem of unrequited love (when one was originally prone to it) also solves the problem of quitting relationships and leaving them properly behind (whereas people who weren't prone to unrequited love, often struggle with forgetting relationships that lasted long). This skill further proved to translate into leaving unhealthy communities with ease, and further still into persevering without any support net. Furthermore, I identified that there are only two conditions under which one is immune to limerence: absence of ambition and satisfied ambition. But there isn't a way to be immune to grief nor to treachery brought about by a powerful, persistent and determined, adversary. So one better learn to deal with things thoroughly and skillfully rather than through ignorance and reification.

Another idea was conceived while writing work on survivalism, which proved easier to express with this guide: to make hardcore people by taking those with potential to be hardcore to begin with, and flipping all their fragile parts into antifragile ones. Or rather, to enable those people to do it to themselves, by providing instructions in the form of a guide. The guide, written as it is on an unpopular rather than vane subject, has advantage of selecting people who are self-honest – which are the only ones that can be made antifragile, or gain more antifragility than they had hitherto. In other words, they are the only people it is worth writing guide for – those who think they are ‘too hard’ for this guide, can take care of themselves. And if their faith in themselves is misplaced, then good riddance.

At first, the “anti-Establishment survivalism” iteration and this guide were being developed in parallel – this was arguably the period where both proceed the fastest, as I could look on some common subjects from multiple perspectives simultaneously – until the guide has largely overtaken the other project, due to next realization: of cleverness getting in the way of practical. There were too many cases of me trying to make impression rather than talking from experience, in that other work. Whenever I reread what I've written, I would spot these instances of pretense, and I came to recognize the pattern behind those pretentious passages also: trying to appeal, out of habit, to scientistic, academic concepts, writing like a despicable academic would write it. All the weasel words and sentences typical in research publications and such. Another characteristic (of parroting scientistic works) was attempt to fit everything into top-down paradigm, despite knowledge from experience (hence all that is practical) being strictly bottom-up.

Thus when I borrowed concept of “akrateia” (back then “akrasia”), I then really struggled to fix the mismatch between academic definition and practical experience – between top-down manner of covering the subject in writing and bottom-up knowledge about real life. If you wonder what akrateia had at all to do with survivalism, I entertained the idea of building self-sufficient communities – hence the need to manage all problems without help of institutions external to community, such as government or police. Furthermore, each recruit would have to be personally effective, so I set out to write the “Theory of Action”, now worked on as a standalone project. Dealing with akrateia then was, by large, subsumed under this theory.

On the haste-aggravated type, I managed to write clear instructions – some of these were incorporated into this guide – but as to others, the approach suggested for generic situation was unreadable and therefore unactionable, for the person who might consult it in their lows. Then I noticed that I laid out clear instructions in “On motivation and indecision” and “Managing limerence until its resolution”: I have wrote those when the past experience was fresh, as instructions for myself, in reflection of what I struggled with the first time, and how I eventually figured how those struggles may be overcome. It also incorporated notes of what I had to relearn, per what I knew but forgot when talking to others – when I wrote these down, I had deliberately proofed them against exactly this socialization-induced forgetfulness. Life later presented me with an opportunity to consult it during new (short-lived) limerence experience, which didn't have rejection – yet per wisdom of past experiences, would not be wise to pursue. Initially, I wasn't sure if it is fair to destroy feelings for a person who treated me well without talking to them first, but in the end I consulted those notes of mine, and they convinced me to proceed with limerence's destruction, for our life paths are incompatible. I experienced no regrets thereafter. It was the second shortest incident of limerence in my life – the first was when I created the unwritten Deconstruction on the fly, which precedes first written codification of it by more than a decade.

So I had to abandon the language tropes copycat from research articles and scientistic journalism, and find the language tropes appropriate to writing practical material – by looking at where I succeeded naturally – and also find a method to eclaircissment: which term I use to specifically mean robust disambiguation of things often referred by the same name, and proofing the exposed difference against confusion. This project of reinvention and of honing such skills is still in progress, and needs to advance further still for “Theory of Action” to be completed.

The advantage the guide has over the original work it span from is that this guide is written strictly out of experience – there is no speculation here (like about what would be useful for self-sufficient community one never tried to build in real life). The core advice about practical works thus is: make yourself the primary target audience, and don't bother with projects where you do not include yourself in the target audience. What? You can, of course, target any audience, and still build something that will get you money or recognition, and it may even turn out useful for someone, but it just won't reach the same level of practicality. And if it is philosophical in nature and yet was not tested nor measured for consistency against one's own experience, it won't be practical at all.

Cue what tested against one's own experience entails: if you purport to describe how society should live, you must necessarily test all your theses by living in society and they must be necessarily be successful – that is, result in fortunate fate for yourself and others. Thus the morality of recluse – Nietzsche's Zarathustra descending from mountains to divulge the prophecy of the coming of Ubermensch – would be of no value whatsoever. I wonder though that Nietzsche may have been aware of this and precisely intended Zarathustra as an ironic figure: a faux sage – a pseudo-intellectual. For just as one can use logic as a rhetorical rather than epistemic instrument – to justify insight born out of personal experience to those who lack said experience – so one can utilize ideals and art to narrate that which they deduced in abstracto, through logic alone: the conclusions unchecked by direct real life experience and therefore void of value.

I have also advanced in understanding akrateia, in process of writing present work. In regards to “inaction” akrateia, I figured the block happens when: the conceived course of action is not really posed to attain the goal, or to hold such attainment, or the motive itself is of no personal relevance. In other words, when akrateia prevented one from taking a course of action rather than resulted in impulsive act, there seemingly was a purpose behind such block. To move around such block, requires to fix either a proper motive or a wiser course action to actually secure it – to address concerns actually relevant. In the limerence incident mentioned a few paragraphs above, I addressed the concern of being fair by ridding myself of limerence but not ceasing contact altogether. The conditions were favorable for this resolution: contact was only in form of electronic messages, in the form of reviews written for her work. Had I tried to ignore the concern of being fair, I would have likely failed for this reason (would have experienced regret and reached out to reconcile, which might have been not well taken) – *at the time*, because six months later I would still disengage them completely on my own initiative. Why? They've changed, dropped their former interests, and I have

zero respect for the person they chose to become after – only “get lost” levels of contempt. Morality does not reward one with good people, only guards against adding more ills to one's life than one is fated to receive. I count this lesson as a blessing: if that relationship did not fall apart, I could have overlooked this insight, and thus include unrealistic promises about morality in this treatise; the negative experience made me reconsider certain things I was about to write, as well as reminded me that my work is centered on what one can actually do independent of circumstances, or which holds during unfavorable circumstances and sustained adversity. For I write instruction for the worst times – in better times, people can take care of themselves without instruction.

So I chose to present a view of “akrateia” devoid of shame-laden connotations, and (re)define akrateia to mean the state in which there is a perception of powerlessness of conscious mind – a definition that captures a raw fact that alone precisely identifies phenomenon, and as such any theory about it can always be revisited, corrected or replaced. One perceives absence of willpower to commit to the course of action one decided on rationally, whether that be to refrain from some action, or to execute it. Or alternatively, breaks one's promise to oneself. This may happen for a very good reason that is later understood and confirmed to be such, but at other times unfortunate, and at all times, the feeling of powerlessness is distressing and sets it apart from phenomena that are not akrateia: such as no regrets malevolence, a premeditated crime undertaken for a gain, etc.

Addiction to outlets does hinder finding a proper solution to a relevant problem and thus getting out of inaction akrateia. I've observed that such addiction develops in aftermath of past helplessness, and to trigger this pattern one must first fail again. It won't block path where one does know with confidence how to proceed and encounters no problems enacting the plan. Still, like with every idea developed out of helplessness, outlets don't make one better off than one started. I did indicate a practical approach to fighting addiction to outlets at the end of “On motivation and indecision”: replace outlets with more consciously controlled ones, and interrupt the bad ones as soon as you remember. As per Steve Jobs's remark about focus, to implement one good idea requires to say no to a thousand other good ideas – and distractions are even less than that. All distractions make you worse off instead of better off, especially when they are pushed onto you by someone else (ads, social network algorithms, etc.).

After I've concentrated all efforts on the present work, I finally conceptualized reification, and the preconditions for akrateia itself also became apparent. **Akrateia**

occurs when reification failed to capture relevant concerns: one thinks up in words a plan that ignores what is relevant, and hence that plan is thwarted, for better or for worse. The action that is not contained, or inaction, is rooted outside of the false narrative that one tried to frame his life with.

Now as to how these false narratives are constructed. Often they are adopted from society, or otherwise as cope in aftermath of antagonistic interaction with society. Upon facing threat of ostracism, we may deny ourselves the recognition of what we previously understood as important concerns to us – it will in this case later break through if not recognized and addressed. Or we tried to pursue an image esteemed in our social circles, but it doesn't mesh with who we are and what we want from life, hence we couldn't master persistence on that course of action, and it was a wrong course for us anyway. Or we tried to do things a certain way based on what we overheard from some discussion, but that was not a good way of doing things in this case. Or we abstained from investigating a course that seemed similar to one that was criticised (distinct methods having the same abstract label), and thus did not feel like trying something that might have actually worked.

In situations where haste (or another mental turmoil) might result in unrestraint, one can use morality to regain a stable ground, but it has to be authentic to achieve that – to be rooted in and verified by experience and thus not be a byproduct of reification. Whereas 'tastes of society' (social norms) that some mistake for morality are of course thwarted by akrateia (not just 'can be', but '*are*'). The case of inaction, too, can be probed from moral perspective, depending on which inaction may have to be resolved one way instead of the other. Is goal actually worthy of pursuit? Are methods acceptable and practical? Am I conflicted about goal and methods, have been coerced or tricked into either? Have I been honest with myself when conceiving of this act, or am I trying to conceal ulterior motives behind the proposed action so as not to confront their origins? Given that the root of all types of akrateia is the same – reification hiding relevant concerns – then rediscovering and taking care of what is relevant, when prompted to do so by one's own inaction, might prevent acting recklessly later under haste. If no practical course of action is conceivable at the time to address relevant concerns, one can anticipate that haste will happen later, and thus setup a contingency plan for it.

The other challenge in writing practical philosophy was bracing myself mentally for the inevitable controversy that the work will provoke, especially by references to controversial material. Past experiences have already taught me, however,

not to compromise on one's key points. Furthermore, I've actually experimented with neutrality in the first half of the guide, and rejected it. I learned through that experiment, that value judgments are necessary to make decisions. Thus there is no making working approaches palatable to those who judge differently – no point in compromising. That, on top of all past compromises I regret, when I gave the benefit of doubt to people, who demonstrated prejudice against others: e.g. a Christian who had an issue with witchcraft, and who would later turn out a grass.

There remains a formidable challenge of combating the atomicity of modernity: this pervert kind of individualism and lack of genuine – rather than performative – concern for others, of respect for obligations and cooperation, of society giving back to individuals, which is quite distinct from individuals pledging loyalty to some abstract, reified cause. This enemy, atomicity, does not rest on only one support pillar (the most evident of which would be capitalism) – it appears the cerebral knowledge about evolution passed around as a gospel, also fosters atomicity. “Darwinism” as it occurs in public discourse is indeed cerebral: scarcely anyone supports their claims about evolution with citations from primary (untranslated) source they've personally verified.

Both scientism and capitalism seem to gain strength and credibility from undiminished reputation of Darwinism among mundane flock, which, amusingly, itself is bolstered by everyone eagerly attributing to themselves expertise on its subject. I find it amusing also to see Neo-Nazis ponder the question why their cause has so much infighting and is nothing like National-Socialism of Germany, for the fatal flaw is at core of their discernment. In so far as they promote “survival of the fittest” (which slogan is not even an idea of Darwin – check its origins) in a crude, individualistic, reductionist interpretation, their cause will never get traction, as atomicity and disdain for cooperation is embedded in the premise. There is no actual socialism in their National-Socialism, only an impostor, a sacrificial altar dedicated to the god of vanity.

Nonetheless, after finishing this work I intend to take a break from philosophy. The Theory of Action still needs to be completed, but it can't be rushed. Since practice is capable of getting far ahead of any theory, I've included sufficient amount of practical material in this guide to bootstrap one's journey to the stars. Should one dare to uncover and pursue their own destiny, they have all means available, and the rest they can get elsewhere along the way: from other people who got the relevant practical experience, whom they'll naturally meet when

putting themselves out there and engaging with the world, pushing for hard achievements – living to one's fullest.

I will thus conclude this essay by selecting a handful of observations presented earlier (which observations help get through adversity):

- **The need to be appreciated by others is not unconditional, but diminishes when one succeeds at one's own goals.**
- **The high of great success in one's own eyes, although transient, wipes out all preceding pain.**
- **Healthy order of things is when upon achievement, mind has already set sights on a next target.**
- **It is necessary to distinguish ideas that enabled survival from ideas adopted following survival, and be especially wary of those adopted in times of impotence.**
- **Peer acceptance is fragile. Past accomplishment of personally relevant goals is robust. Defiance is antifragile.**

Epilogue

This work summarizes my direct practical experience of handling unwanted affections. All theoretical considerations that also got included in this work (such as the existential nature of love, the use of term “limerence” and so on) are secondary to that. I have optimized this manual specifically to be an instructional guide, to practically and efficiently overcome present affection of whatever kind. Therefore, anything pertaining to philosophy was moved to second half of work, for while also practical, is more a long-term education than something of immediate relevance.

This guide does not serve an introduction to the subject of “love as a compelling force” for someone unfamiliar to it, and does not bother defending the reality of this experience to them, as such reasoning would have nothing to do with practical utility. The work of Dorothy Tennov (“Love and Limerence”) can serve such a purpose, to duplicate it is not necessary. However, after her death, her neutral

narrative of limerence was invalidated and bastardized by various academics, money-makers and influencers, and the term “limerence” was distorted by those who appropriated it via ascribing it value-laden connotations not present in original. What happened to it serves an example of how secondary sources cannot be relied upon.

I wrote this guide to enable self-determination for others, so they can use it to overcome unwanted affection of any kind, which by their decision may include **reciprocal love**, **terminating relationships by one's own initiative**, and so on – such experiences not necessary perceived as unfortunate but rather one wills to do away with them. This may stem from a “my will be done” disposition, or a defiant attitude: “others hold love as it were a virtue, but I trample it as it were a vice”. No limits are placed as to why reader decides so and how they approach it, and it is left to reader's discretion whether they stop at fulfilling that specific goal, or consider questions posed about morality (as presented in the latter half of guide) to be also relevant.

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